

ISLAM AND COLLECTIVISM

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In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful!

PREFACE

If regression of action continues for a longer period of time, it does not confine itself to just regression of action, but it first becomes regression of emotions and feelings and then becomes regression of ideals and perceptions. When a nation or a community loses its real nature in the field of its life, it cannot retain it in its entirety even in its mind for long and the darkness of oblivion covers it. It begins to forget the real objective of its existence on the earth and the kind of attitude and strategy it has to adopt to achieve that objective.

Since a very long period of time the Muslim Brotherhood is going through this psychological process. It was its official duty to establish the Religion of Islam, keep it established, to bear witness of the "Truth" for the entire mankind, to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and call people towards perfect righteousness. This was the purpose of its existence and this was its true nature. For a period of time, it discharged its duty as it should be discharged and everyone, including itself, saw with their own eyes what the nature and purpose of this Brotherhood is. Thereafter, its negligence caused it to face defeat in life and it practically deprived itself of its position. This deprivation began to generate more deprivations, and now the state of affairs is such that although it remembers literally its objective and principles of life and its religious perceptions to a certain extent, it is difficult to believe that it remembers their true meanings too. If at all we believe this, it cannot be agreed that it has retained ideologically and emotionally the sense of their importance.

The most important thing amongst these principles of life is the issue of its collective characteristic and its particular system of organization, which is although seems to be only

one issue, but actually is a combination of several issues; it would not be wrong to regard it as the jugular vein of the Muslim Brotherhood. It is a great tragedy that the hearts and minds of common Muslims have become estranged from the reality, importance and practically demands of this important issue. The state of this estrangement is such that a section of the leadership of this Brotherhood gets greatly perturbed just with its perception, and perceives the collective characteristic of Islam and the organization of the Brotherhood the greatest "blasphemy." According to them, people can gather for every cause, every objective can become a basis for an organization, for every mission and ism a collective system can be created, but the Muslims should not organize themselves as Muslims for Islam. Although others do not think on these lines and like very much that the Muslims should get united, but they do not have any idea and perception and are not able to explain why, how and for what purpose the Muslims should get united and organized, and how does it affect them if they do not get united. They talk about the organization of the Muslim Brotherhood, but generally their understanding of its meaning, its purpose, its strategy, everything is more un-Islamic than Islamic. On whatever point the Muslims converge and in whatever way they get united they consider it Islamic unity and organization of the Brotherhood, although Islam has commanded the Muslims to unite and organize themselves only on the basis of the Book of Allah and the Traditions of His Prophet (pbuh). They consider every kind of organization of the Muslims as the desired goal of Islam, although Islam does not demand just an "organization" (*Jamat*) but it demands "the organization" (*al-Jamat*). The meaning of "the organization" according to Dr. Rasheed Raza Misry is: "*The type of collective system of the Muslims during the era of Prophethood which can keep establish the Religion of Islam by promulgating the ordinances of the Book and the Traditions.*"¹

This state of affairs direly demanded that all necessary aspects of this issue are clearly explained in the light of the Quran and the Traditions, so that when we talk about the unity

¹ *Tafseer al-Manaar*, Vol. 6, p. 367.

and organization of the Brotherhood and practically take up the work of accomplishing it, the real nature of the issue should not get hidden and it is fully understood what actually is the organization and collective system which Islam has ordained, how much it is desired by Islam and the Brotherhood and why it is desired.

This book is an effort to fulfil this demand. May Allah make this effort a success. Amen!

Sadruddin

Sunday, 2 Zil Hijjah, 1381 AH

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful!

THE POSITION OF COLLECTIVISM IN ISLAM

HUMAN NATURE AND COLLECTIVISM

As with the perception of a child the perception of its mother's lap also comes into view, similarly with the perception of human life, essentially the perception of collectivism also comes into focus. No era is found when man has not been in need of collectivism. Hence, even the darkest period of history is not devoid of it. When civilization had not yet been founded, when man had not yet come out of the caves, when he had not thought of cultivating crops and weaving cloths, when only the shades of trees and their leaves and fruits were the means of his sustenance, at that time too he used to live united in the shape of families and thought it to be the cradle of life. When man's taste for civilization grew and the impediments for wider collectivism began to get eliminated, its desire for collectivism too began to grow. Family units got converted into tribal units, and the tribal units got converted into national collectivism. Now these national collective systems are getting ready to be converted into one world collective system or rather into one international family.

Why man behaves in this manner continuously? Why is he desirous of collectivism from day one of his existence and why with the passage of time this desire has been increasing and developing? In answer to these questions the only thing that can be unanimously said is that there are certain strong factors which do not allow him to be isolated from the other members of his species and which esoterically force him to live jointly instead of living separately. If you observe keenly your esoteric, you will find that there are two factors behind this: (1) affinity towards homogeneity; and (2) need for cooperation.

"Affinity towards homogeneity" means man is psychologically attracted to the members of his own species and finds a deep affinity towards them, feels happiness and tranquillity in their company, and separation from them perturbs him and a continuous or lengthy isolation afflicts him with madness.

"Need for cooperation" means that on the one hand, man's individual capabilities are very limited, on the other hand, as against them, his worldly needs are very wide. Therefore, these capabilities are not enough to fulfil his needs. He cannot even fulfil his basic needs until and unless the others do not help him directly or indirectly.

Therefore, collectivism is not only man's desire but also his natural need. He not only irresistibly gets attracted to the other members of human race under the inborn emotion of homogeneity, but is also dependent on them to fulfil his worldly needs. It means that these two strong roots of love for collectivism are deeply rooted in him. Therefore, it is quite natural that if he has not been found to be estranged or indifferent to collectivism. As long as man remains a human being, this would remain quite natural and essential for him. This is such an established fact that there has never been any difference of opinion about it. The renowned Greek scholar and philosopher, Aristotle, defines man thus:

"Man is by nature a political animal."¹

Evidently, politics is the ultimate form of collectivism. Therefore, the meaning of "political animal" is that animal which is attracted to collectivism to its last extent. In other words, according to Aristotle the particular attribute that distinguishes man from other animals is this last degree of attraction to collectivism. If he had not possessed this attribute, he would have also been an animal like other

¹ Aristotle's *Politics*, Translated by Jowett, Benjamin, p.28 (1253a), Oxford, 1920.

animals. The renowned scholar and researcher of the Middle Ages, Allama Ibn Khaldun, says:

"Living together is inevitable for the members of human race, and the people of knowledge and wisdom state this fact by describing man as, by nature, attracted to civilization."¹

As far as the modern-day scholars and philosophers are concerned, this thing is one amongst those proved facts that does not need any more discussions or proofs.

The Holy Quran is not a Book of psychology or collectivism to directly discuss the issue pertaining to man's passion for collectivism. In spite of this, since whatever it says in its sphere of discussion it keeps in view the facts pertaining to human psychology along with various other scientific facts, it has indirectly given very clear hints in this regard too. When these hints are analysed, it is clearly felt that the Holy Quran too declares human nature to favour collectivism. For example when it says: *"And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mate from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts)."*² it indirectly says that basically man has been created as the one who loves collectivism. Similarly, when it describes in detail the comforts and gifts of the Paradise, it also considers essential to describe the companionship, mutual conversation and dining together of the people of the Paradise.³ In other words, it pronounces that the demand for collectivism is such an invaluable demand of man's nature that nothing can be dearer to him than it not only in this world but also in the Hereafter, and that in the Hereafter too man can achieve complete satisfaction and tranquillity only when he can enjoy the companionship of his fellow human beings.

¹ *Muqaddima Ibn Khaldun.*

² The Quran, 30:21.

³ For example, the Quran states: *"(They will be) brothers (joyfully) facing each other on thrones (of dignity)." (15:47) "They shall there exchange, one with another, a (loving) cup free of frivolity, free of all taint of ill. ...They will advance to each other, engaging in mutual enquiry."* (52:23, 25)

ISLAM: A NATURAL RELIGION

Keep this aspect of human nature in view and then investigate what status Islam gives to the demands of human nature so that it can be decided both principally and logically whether there should be a place for collectivism and its practical demands in the ideological and practical system of Islam.

As regards the creation of man, the Holy Quran avers that Allah has created man's Soul in due proportion and order ("By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it."¹ The Arabic word used in this Verse is *sawiya* which means "to even, level, nivellate, flatten, straighten; to smooth down, to equalize, etc." In another place, the Holy Quran describes this fact in these words: "*We have indeed created man in the best of moulds.*"² The Arabic word used in this Verse is *taqweem*, which means "straightening up." When this word is used keeping in view the esoteric and the attributes of a thing, then naturally it would mean creating that thing in the most suitable manner for a particular objective. In view of these clarifications, the clear meaning of "straightening" of man or creating him in "the best of moulds" will be that Allah has designed man's nature for the purpose for which He has created him and for discharging the duty for which he has been sent into the world. Man has not been denied any one of the strengths and capabilities which were required for fulfilling his objective and discharging his duty, and has not been denied any of the powers and inclinations that were required in his creation, or he has been given some extra strengths and inclinations apart from the ones that are required.

On the one hand, this is the status of human nature in the sight of Islam, and on the other hand, Islam says that it is the only straight path walking on which man can correctly fulfil his objective of creation and discharge the duty of his life. In such a situation, it will be the obvious demand of the

¹ The Quran, 91:7.

² The Quran, 95:4.

intellect that Islam should not neglect the human nature even to the extent of an iota. Hence, its foundation should be based exactly on this very nature, its teachings should indeed be the details of the abstract demands of this nature, and should be the interpretation of its vague voices. It is understood from the Holy Quran and the Traditions of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) that this demand of the intellect is not wrong. It is a fact that Islam does not ignore the human nature even a bit and its foundation is completely based on this nature. The Holy Quran avers:

"And so, set thy face steadfastly towards the (one ever-true) faith (turning away from all that is false), in accordance with the natural disposition which Allah has instilled into man." (30:30)

This is the clear pronouncement of the fact that the thing on which the foundation of Islam has been laid down is that nature on which man has been created.

The Holy Quran has described itself (or in other words has described Islam) in various places as *zikr*, *tazkira* and *zikra* which literally mean "to remind." The meaning of the Quran or Islam being "a reminder" can only mean that it is not a thing which has been brought from outside and loaded on to man and which is an unfamiliar thing for him. Rather, it is such a thing that its foundations are found within him from day one and it is the silent voice of his nature which has been translated into words and placed before him. As he was not listening to this silent voice and had forgotten that reality which was present in him, the Merciful Creator reminded him of this forgotten lesson. This is the nature of Islam in view of which it declares its rejection as "*kufr*." The literal meaning of "*kufr*" is "to hide." In other words, rejection of Islam means hiding that nature and drawing a dark veil of untruth over its face on which man has been created. The Prophet of Allāh (pbuh) has clarified this further in one of his Sayings thus:

"There is no child who is not born on its nature. But (it so happens) that his parents make him either a Jew or a Christian or a Zoroastrian."¹

It means that the human nature is in congruous with only Islam. Every child, after attaining adulthood, would have chosen only Islam if there had not been any outside intervention. But this intervention essentially takes place; his parents from the cradle itself try to polish his mind with the polish of their own religion and, therefore, when he reaches adulthood, he becomes either a Jew, or a Christian, or a Zoroastrian or any other type of non-Muslim. If there were not to be any kind of intervention, if the extraordinary power of his environment were not to drag him in a particular direction, and his real nature were to be allowed to remain as it was on his birth, and then he were to be presented together with the teachings of different religions, he would have chosen Islam as his religion; as soon as his sight would fall on Islam amongst the compilation of various religions, he would dart towards it as a child darts only towards his mother mingled amongst various other women. This would happen only because every other religion is far removed from the straight path of human nature, and because if anyone's nature has not been affected by parental training or the effects of the environment, he would not get attracted to these religions and would feel strangeness towards them. However, he would have been drawn towards Islam, because he would find it according to his own nature and he would find a deep love and familiarity towards it as though if his nature is pure iron, Islam would prove to be pure magnet for him.

In the light of the aforesaid arguments and facts, it is quite evident that Islam is the interpreter of the human nature and that its foundation has been laid down on this nature. Hence, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has himself explained that "*the religion of the nature on which Allah has created man is this Religion (of Islam).*"²

¹ Bukhari.

² *Ruh al-Mu`ani*, Part 21, p. 40.

CLEAR DEMAND OF BEING A NATURAL RELIGION

If Islam is a natural Religion and its foundation is established on human nature, and if only those strengths and inclinations have been created in human nature for which his objective of existence had self-evidently demanded, then the inevitable demand of both these things would be that Islam should not be in favour of crushing any of man's natural strengths and inclinations, should not consider any one of them as an impediment in its way, should not reject the lawful demands of any one of them, and should not fail to take the services of any one of them. It can be correct to do so only if it agrees with any one of the three things: (1) Either its foundation is not based on human nature; (2) or that the Creator of the human nature has created in it some such things which are entirely unnecessary or rather harmful for man's objective of existence; (3) or that it has not come to show man the straight path of discharging his duties and achieving true success and salvation. But, when it is not ready to agree with any one of these things and rather it considers them as the most wrong and false things of the world, then the intellect will be forced to say that the attitude of Islam about each and every one of the human strengths and inclinations should be inevitably positive and constructive, it is essential that it respects all of them, admit their lawful demands, consider them as useful for the attainment of the real objective of human life, and guide them to extract work from them.

Any person whose knowledge of Islamic teachings is not superficial will certainly adduce that the attitude of Islam is not any different from this judgement of the intellect. Islam indeed gives this status to all the natural strengths and inclinations of man, considers them liable for respect, gives instructions and suggests ways and means to fulfil their demands, and bitterly opposes that any of them should be ignored as contemptuous. Moreover, this attitude of Islam about these strengths and inclinations is not to show any indulgence or has any negative basis. It does not entertain them by saying them that since man is born with these "maladies," some consideration be given to them; rather, it

does it entirely under its perception of Religion. According to Islam, these strengths and inclinations are the sources by the correct usage of which man can fulfil his objective of existence in an excellent manner, and therefore, it declares fulfilment of their demands not a worldly act but a religious and devotional act. For example, man has the natural urge to eat and drink, to have bodily comforts, to conserve his generation, to look after his wife and children and to entertain his kindred and guests. Similarly, he has been born with faculties of anger, hate, firmness, war, lust, sensuality, speech, sense of joy and sense of grief. Outwardly, these things seem not to be compatible with Religion and religious aesthetics; rather many of them are such which can be said to be quite opposite to it. But Islam says, nay; these are all the very essence of human nature and nothing is worthless or inessential. As the rights of Allah are obligated on man, similarly the rights of his soul, his body, his eyes, his wife and children and friends and relatives are obligated on him:

"Your body has the right over you, your eye has the right over you, your wife has the right over you, and your visitors have the right over you." Your Lord has the right over you, your soul has the right over you, and your family has the right over you. Hence, bestow upon every holder of the right, his right."¹

"Your Lord has the right over you, your soul has the right over you, and your family has the right over you. Hence, bestow upon every holder of the right, his right."²

Even spending his hard-earned wealth on himself and his wife and children is a righteous deed which is richly rewarded: *"Begin with your soul, and spend on it."³ "Whatever you spend is charity for you, even the morsel of food that you place in your wife's mouth."⁴*

¹ Bukhari, Book of Fasting.

² *Ibid.*

³ Muslim, Book of Zakat.

⁴ Bukhari, Book of Charities.

A person who fasts continuously in the misplaced fervour of worship is considered as if he has not at all fasted: "*He who always fasts, has not fasted (at all).*"¹

Marriage is a command of Islam, and the one who turns away from it is not entitled to associate himself with the Prophet of Allah (pbuh): "*I like to marry women; hence, one who dislikes my Tradition, does not belong to me.*"²

Man has the natural urge to have his own offspring: "*And seek what Allah has ordained for you.*"³ "*Marry such a woman who loves (her husband) more and who can produce more children.*"⁴

The best of the mankind, i.e. the Prophets of Allah (peace be upon them) had wives and children: "*We did send messengers before you, and appointed for them wives and children.*"⁵

When a Believer copulates with his wife, he is rewarded: "*When one of you copulates with his wife, it is a charity (for him).*"⁶

Expression of enmity and hate, on the rightful occasion, is the essential symbol of Faith: "*One who loves for the sake of Allah, loathes for the sake of Allah, gave for the sake of Allah, and refused for the sake of Allah, indeed perfected his Faith.*"⁷

To wage war to protect and help Islam and Muslims is the best of the good deeds: *It was asked: "O Prophet of Allah, which person is loftier?" The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said: "The*

¹ Bukhari, Book of Fasting.

² Bukhari, Book of Marriage.

³ The Quran, 2:187.

⁴ Abu Dawood, Book of Marriage.

⁵ The Quran, 13:38.

⁶ Muslim, Books of Zakat

⁷ Abu Dawood.

believer who strives in the Cause of Allah with his wealth and soul.”¹

And if one’s bosom is bereft of the desire to wage such a war, it cannot be the bosom of a true Believer: “*One who died and he never took part in war or never even thought of it in his mind, died on a branch of hypocrisy.*”²

It is the essentiality of Faith to deal with the unbelief and hypocrisy harshly and not gently: “*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those who are with him are strong against Unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each others.*”³

Not speaking out is not the symbol of Islam, but is the symbol of Ignorance: “*This is not lawful; it is one of the acts of Ignorance.*”⁴

Loving one’s offspring is a lovable and religious attitude, and keeping aloof from it is a very loathsome attitude: *The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) kissed Hasan bin Ali and said: “The one who is not merciful will not be shown mercy.”*⁵

Grieving and weeping on the death of a relative and friend is not an undesirable act; rather it is the manifestation of humanity and mercy: “[...]*This is the mercy and compassion that Allah has created in the hearts of his servants.*”⁶]

All the aforesaid evidences prove as an undeniable and clear fact that Islam does not consider the natural strengths and inclinations reprehensible. Rather, it considers reprehensible to consider them shameful and reject them and think making use of them as against religiosity. Islam has been sent down by the very same Wise Creator who had bestowed

¹ Bukhari, Book of Jihad.

² Muslim, Vol. 2.

³ The Quran, 48:29.

⁴ Bukhari, Vol. 2.

⁵ Bukhari, Book of Etiquettes.

⁶ Muslim, Book of Funerals.

on man all his natural faculties, and therefore, He could not have declared any one of these strengths as worthless. Being Allah's Religion and the Religion compatible with human nature, fundamentally its existential objective should be to guide man to utilise his natural faculties, stop him from their wrong usage and not only teach him the correct way of their usage but exhort him to do so, and in fact, this is the most singular attribute of Allah's Religion which distinguishes it from other religions and differentiates Islam from un-Islam.

When Islam, being a natural Religion, declares man's each and every natural inclination as entitled to get attention, looks at them with respect, and admits functioning of some expediency and necessity behind them, and on that basis also teaches the fulfilment of their rightful demands, there is no reason why it should have declared collectivism, which in itself is a very powerful and prominent inclination of human nature, as a reprehensible thing or would have ignored it. This is beyond reasoning. On the contrary, the reasoning says that it would have considered this natural inclination of man and his existential objective a thing of importance and would have given its demands that place in its teachings which it deserves. Moreover, it would have declared that person a misguided follower who, being a Muslim would not give reasonable importance to such teachings and desist from discharging their obligations. If this is the case and if he has adopted this attitude, there is no doubt that the court of justice and intellect would arraign him with the severe accusation of unprincipled and contradictory behaviour, and it would not be easy for him to clear this accusation.

Now let us see how far Islam, being a natural religion, has accepted this principled and clear demand of collectivism and what status it really has given it.

THE AGREED RELIGIOUS IMPORTANCE OF COLLECTIVISM

Even a cursory analysis of the Quran and Sunnah assures that collectivism has not been kept out of the purview of Islamic

ideology and practice. Rather, Islam has very clearly acknowledged its importance and demands. If this cursory analysis is allowed to work deeply, the extent of this assurance will cover a vast area. It will be seen that the importance that has been given to collectivism in this system is unbelievably extraordinary, which perhaps is unparalleled. No aspect which could have been adopted to explain and exhort its importance has been left out, and no occasion has been ignored where there could be room for adopting collective attitude, and Islam has not commanded to do so.

The proof of this claim and the details of this synopsis will be found in the following things:

1. Islam's cultural and civilizational perception, i.e. man's that position accepting it to be man's real cultural position, Islam has addressed him.
2. Those Islamic Laws which have been promulgated for the Muslims with regard to their collective system and unity of their Brotherhood.
3. Those religious instructions in which general issues and matters have also been advised to be discharged collectively in one way or the other.
4. The etiquettes of collectivism which have been mandated in respect of obligated acts of worship.

Now let us study the above, one by one, in detail.

(1) IN THE LANGUAGE OF CULTURAL PERCEPTION

Any religion when it addresses its follower, it will certainly keep in its mind a fixed perception of man's real position, and based on this fixed position alone it begins its teachings. This is so important that it cannot be ignored nor is it correct to ignore it, because this is one of those things which fixes for religions boundaries with regard to their style of address, their commands and teachings, and their values. If these are

not kept in view, no moderation can be found in their teachings or any reasonableness.

One among the issues in which it is essential to fix the real nature of man and his real and natural stand, is the culture and civilization. Every religion has to decide from its very inception whether man is such a species which has to set up his own world and live alone, or he has to live in association with others. If he has to live in association with others, how limited or wide should be the sphere of this association, and how strong should be this association. Naturally, Islam has also addressed man after giving determined answers to these questions, and has devised its teachings keeping him on a particular position. What are these answers and in Islam's view what should be man's real stand in respect of cultural aspect? To know this, on the one hand, listen to its statement:

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and Tribes, that ye may know Each other (Not that ye may despise (each other)." (49:13)

On the other hand, look at its practice: there is a deep influence of collectivism on its Law, a large portion of its commands and instructions are reserved for man's collective life, and it has mandated their obedience as it has mandated other commands. While it discusses the rights of Allah, it also gives importance to the rights of His servants. It just does not teach the system of worship, but also gives an entire system of obedience to lead a collective life. There is no segment of life – individual, family, civil, state, ethics, social, economics, politics, international relations – where it does not have instructions and commands, and there is no path of life where its guidance is not found.

The fact that these two issues – Islam's clear statement and its clear practice – reveal does not require any further arguments and proof or any more explanations. These two issues in themselves make a clear pronouncement that Islam,

while addressing man, has placed him on such a position which can be called the loftiest position of collectivism. In the background of its teachings, man's viewpoint, which exists as a proved and real viewpoint, is the viewpoint of the species which leads an organized collective life. It does not have any other perception of human individuals except that they are all composite parts of a society and live as parts of this very same "whole." Homes, agricultural fields, markets, educational institutions, research centres, assembly and parliaments, fields of war, halls of peace and all other such places are their attachments and necessities. Therefore, whenever they are to be addressed, it should be done keeping in view their admitted and real viewpoint.

If Islam keeps in mind this cultural perception of man while addressing him, it is the self-evident proof that it regards collectivism as an essential issue for its followers, and it considers it so essential that if man is separated from it, there will not remain any genuine addressee for it on earth.

(2) IN THE LANGUAGE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMANDS

There is no doubt that Islam has given great and fundamental importance to individual. Individual alone is its first and real addressee. As he is born alone so also it is his individual responsibility to make his life successful by following and obeying the commands and the Will of Allah, and in the Hereafter, he has to present himself alone before Allah to give an account of his deeds. But Islam also says that the path that takes man to his destination of success does not bypasses collectivism; rather it passes through the middle of an organized collective life. Hence, the Holy Quran, determining this "path," mentions its different stages thus:

"O ye who believe,... hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves." (3:102-103)

To know further about "*be not divided among yourselves,*" and how to remain united and what should be standard of this unity, we have to refer back to the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). He says:

"Hold fast to the community and keep away from division."¹

"I command you with five things: (1) collective life; (2) listening (to the commands of the leader); (3) obeying (the commands); (4) migration; and (5) Jihad in the Cause of Allah."²

It is understood from the aforesaid Sayings that the command of adopting collective life that Islam gives is not based on any loose type of collective life which has been joined together just by some ethical ties. Rather, it is such a united, organized and disciplined collective life which has been strongly bonded together with the metallic strings of "listening" and "obedience."

Moreover, it is not just a mandatory command to hold fast to the collective life, but it is such a mandatory command that its disobedience results in the loss of Faith and Islam. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) further explains this aspect thus:

"Any person who came out of the Community (al-Jamat) even to the extent of the span of a hand, indeed he has removed the noose of Islam from his neck."³

"Whoever came out of the obedience (of the leader of the Muslims) and separated from the Community (al-Jamat) and died in that state, he died the death of Ignorance."⁴

¹ Tirmizi, Vol. 2, p. 41.

² Ahmed, Tirmizi, as referred to in Mishkat, p. 321.

³ Ahmed, Tirmizi, as referred to in Mishkat, p. 321.

⁴ Muslim, Vol. 2, p. 127.

As cutting off one's relationship from *al-Jamat* is against Faith, similarly not joining the collective system is also very dangerous from the religious point of view.

"Any person who died and he did not have the noose of allegiance (of the leader of the Muslims) in his neck, died the death of Ignorance."¹

When this is the position of *al-Jamat* and when separation from this collective life takes man to the life of Ignorance, it is quite logical that breaking up of this system should never be tolerated. Hence, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said in this regard:

"Any person, who wants to divide this al-Jamat when it has been united, put him to sword whoever he might be."²

On the other hand, naturally the reward and loftiness of those people who sacrifice everything to safeguard the practical form of this collective system – the Islamic State – has been regarded as enviably great. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) says:

"Guarding of the borders for a day and night is loftier than one month's continuous fasting and praying. And if he dies during this period, his good deeds which he used to perform in his lifetime would be considered as still being performed, and he will be provided with sustenance. Moreover, he will be secured from those who put people to trials and tribulations."³

"The Fire of the Hell cannot touch two kinds of eyes: One that shed tears due to the fear of Allah, and the second is that which kept awake guarding the borders for the sake of Allah."⁴

¹ *Ibid*, p. 128.

² Muslim, Vol. 2, p. 128.

³ Muslim, Vol. 2, p. 142.

⁴ Tirmizi, Vol. 1, p. 210.

Similarly, obedience of this system has been regarded as a sign of Faith and obedience of the leaders has been declared as obedience of Allah and His Prophet. Hence, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said:

"The one, who obeyed the leader, obeyed me and the one who disobeyed the leader, disobeyed me."¹

The obligation of "obedience of the leader" has been instructed to be undertaken to the last limit. It has not been permitted to withdraw from the allegiance and obedience of even those leaders who are oppressors and evil-mongers, although they are severely condemned by Islam. In spite of this, Islam instructs its followers to bear with these oppressions and never challenge their leadership and obey them in all good deeds. Why it is that Islam has adopted this policy of overlooking and has commanded the Muslims to be patient in respect of oppressive and tyrannical leaders? It is just to safeguard the collective system of the Muslim Brotherhood and not allow the unity of the Muslims to disintegrate. Imam Nawawi, while discussing this kind of Sayings, observes:

"These Sayings strictly enjoin that the commands of the leaders should be obeyed in all circumstances, and their purpose is that the unity of the Muslim should remain intact, because disunity will cause deprivation of power both in respect of their worldly and religious matters."²

This is a brief description of those commands which Islam has given to its followers in respect of collective system and communal unity. If we ponder over these instructions alone, it will be quite evident how far Islam values and gives importance to collectivism. According to the Quran and Sunnah, if it is necessary for the Muslims to be bounded by a particular bind (Rope of Allah) and keep away from disunity, if it is mandatory on the Muslims to establish the system of

¹ Muslim, Vol. 2, p. 124.

² Sharah Muslim, Vol. 2, p. 124.

Caliphate,¹ if the obedience of the Leader of the Muslims is the obedience of Allah and His Prophet, if separating from the *al-Jamat* of Muslims even for a span of hand deprives the neck of a Muslim the noose of Islam, if dying without making the oath of allegiance to the Leader is declared as a death of Ignorance, if the life of the one who divides the *al-Jamat* becomes violable, and if there is no other greater form of worship than safeguarding the collective system (Islamic State), then think what position that collectivism should get and it has not got in Islam.

(3) IN THE LANGUAGE OF GENERAL COLLECTIVE INSTRUCTIONS

When we talk about "collectivism" and "collective system of life," their widest and loftiest meaning is generally taken not more than as establishment of an organized system of governance. As far as the common societies are concerned, this collectivism is considered as the desired standard and zenith of perfection and the remaining part of the human life outside the purview of the State is considered to be independent of collectivism. Islam not agreeing with this general viewpoint goes a step further and instructs its followers to lead a collective life, as far as possible, outside the sphere and influence of the Government. Let us study the instructions that Islam gives in this regard:

- It is narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar that the Prophet of Allah said: "It is not permissible for even three persons who live in a desert, to live without appointing one of them as their leader."²*

This Saying instructs that if there are three persons living in a place, if it happens to be in a desert or wilderness, it is necessary that one amongst the three should be their leader

¹ The Muslim Brotherhood unanimously agrees about the establishment of Caliphate. This issue will be discussed later under a separate heading.

² *Muntaqa*, p. 330.

and the other two should be his subordinates. Without this collectivism and organization, or rather without this tiny "system of governance," their life will not be considered as an Islamic life.

2. *It is narrated by Hazrat Abu Sayeed Khudri that the Prophet of Allah said: "When (even) three men set out on a journey, they should appoint one of them their leader."¹*

That is, the Muslims have been instructed that even while travelling (which is a temporary phase) the journey should not be undertaken without an organized system. Even if three persons are travelling together it will be against the Islamic temperament if they had not nominated one of them as their leader and had not travelled under his leadership.

3. *Hazrat Abu Tha'lba Khashni says that it was the habit of the people to spread out while camping during a journey and used to select different places to camp. When the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) noticed this, rebuking the people he said: "Indeed your scattering in different valleys and fields is because of Satan." The result of this rebuke was that the people never scattered in this way and whenever they camped, they camped together in such a manner that if they were covered, all of them would have come under a piece of cloth.²*

It is understood from this Saying that Islam, let alone allowing travelling in an unorganised way, does not permit even camping for a few hours in the manner which is against collectivism and considers it an act of Satan.

4. *One of the Companions was passing through a valley. He saw there a spring of sweet water which he liked very much. He thought in his heart would it be that I could come and stay here leaving the habitation. Taking this*

¹ Abu Dawood, Vol. 1, p. 351.

² *Ibid.* p. 354

wish with him, he approached the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and sought permission from him. He (the Prophet) said: "No, don't do it. Because the standing of one of you in the Cause of Allah is better than performing the Prayers in his house for seventy years."¹

This Saying shows that whatever seems to be the worldly and religious benefits of leading a solitary life leaving behind the collective life, Islam does not permit its followers to live cut off from the collective system, because however great might be these religious and worldly benefits, they are nothing compared to the benefits and advantages that a Muslim gets in an organized Islamic society.

Just ponder; how these different instructions about the life at home and travelling take the importance of collectivism in the Islamic system of ideology and practice to a new level. Indeed, this reveals such a fact which is found only in Islam and which every other system and society of the world is unaware of. This is a clear proof that the requirements of the collective system of Islamic life does not end with the establishment of a Caliphate, but they bind the human life beyond this sphere too. In other words, in the sight of Islam the importance of collectivism is not only loftier, but also it is wide and very universal; even the segment pertaining to man's ordinary living is also not independent of this. Imam Shawkani, explaining these Sayings, writes:

"These Sayings are proof that wherever there are three or more than three Muslims, for them it is the command of the Islamic Law that they should elect one of them as their leader, because in this way alone they can be safe from differences. ...And if this is the command of Islamic Law for three individuals who are in a forest or travelling together, then for those large number of Muslims who live in a village or city, this would be even more mandatory."²

¹ Tirmizi, Vol. 1.

² Nayl al-Awtaar, Vol. 9, p. 157.

(4) IN THE LANGUAGE OF COLLECTIVE ETIQUETTE OF WORSHIP

The segment of human life, which is commonly known as the "segment of worship" is such a segment where it is difficult to perceive any role of collectivism. When you mention worship of God, immediately your mind imagines secluded corners and solitude. You begin to visualise that worship is just a religious duty connected with the Hereafter and is not a worldly deed in any respect. Then how can it be made an act of conspicuousness. The household, the locality, the habitat, the country, everything can be said to require collective system, but it is not understandable that for remembrance of Allah collectivism is also required. The nature of remembrance of Allah and acts of worship is such that it requires severance from the surroundings. Hence, the places of worship and the monasteries are the places where nothing can be allowed to be remembered except Allah. Now if any religion declares some collective etiquette as essential, then it should be said that it has taken the last step in giving importance to collectivism. In this situation, to take an estimation of how much importance the collectivism has been given in that religion, nothing can be more decisive than the collective etiquette itself that it has ordered to keep in view in its acts of worship. To the extent to which the number of etiquette will be more and the extent of importance that has been given to them, to that extent the height of the status given to collectivism in that religion will be decided.

As far as Islam is concerned, certainly it is such a religion which includes collective etiquette in its acts of worship. To the extent to which they are included and the extent of importance given to them are explained below:

(i) The Salat (Prayer)

We should naturally first take the Salat (Prayer), because amongst all acts of worship, this is the greatest. It is the essence of the entire Religion of Islam and it has been declared

as the main pillar of Islam. The conditions and the etiquette with which this act of worship has been mandated to perform include the following:

- a) While performing the Prayer, every Muslim should face a particular location (i.e. Ka`ba) [*"So whencesoever you start forth, turn your face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque (Ka`ba); and wheresoever you are, turn your face thither."*¹] A person cannot be considered a Muslim if he does not pray facing the Ka`ba. [*"Any who prays like we pray and faces our Qibla and eats our slaughter is a Muslim."*²] The explicit ordinance to face one particular location is given in spite of the fact that Allah (who is remembered in the Prayer) is present in every direction and every place and is not confined to any particular location or direction, as has been pointed out in the Holy Quran: [*"To Allah belong the East and the West; whithersoever you turn, there is Allah's countenance."*³]
- b) The obligated Prayers, which are the real Prayers amongst all other prayers, have been ordained to be performed in congregation, and the reward of the Prayer which has been performed in congregation has been described as 27 times more than the one which has been performed alone.⁴

The importance of the congregational prayers can be gauged from the fact that the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said about those people who were absent from congregational prayers without any valid reason: *"I contemplate that I should appoint a person in my place to lead the Prayer, and then go to those people who do not come for the congregational prayer, and order that*

¹ The Quran, 2:150.

² Bukhari, Vol. 1, p. 58.

³ The Quran, 2:115.

⁴ Bukhari, Vol. 1.

they are burnt down along with their houses after placing bundles of wood on them.”¹

These are the words of that Prophet who was an epitome of mercy and love. In spite of this, utterance of such strong and frightful words from his mouth indicates that not praying in congregation is not an ordinary mistake but is a very serious and severe sin.

- c) Praying in congregation just does not mean that people should come out of their homes and assemble in one place and perform prayers individually. Rather, it is necessary that they should line-up shoulder to shoulder, and their lines should be as straight as an arrow.² The most able of them should stand in their front and all others should perform the Prayer under his commands, and the entire congregation should follow the leader. This following should be so complete that every action of the congregation should imitate the action of the leader (Imam); the entire congregation should stand up behind the Imam, bow when he bows, prostrate when he prostrates, listen to the recital of the Imam when he recites the Quran, if the Imam commits any mistake during the Prayer, none is allowed to separate himself from the congregation except that Imam can be cautioned about the mistake he has committed by saying *Subhan Allah*.

These two things, i.e. lining-up and following the Imam, just do not indicate the loftiness of the Prayer, but are the essential conditions of the congregational prayer. Any defect in them not only renders the Prayer defective and useless, but also ruins the life in this world and the Hereafter. When the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) noticed the breast of a person protruding a little out of the line-up, he warned: “*O servants of Allah,*

¹ Muslim, Vol. 1.

² Bukhari, Vol. 1.

it is necessary that you should keep your rows straight, otherwise Allah will create divergence between your faces.”¹ On another occasion, he said: “Any person who joins the row of the Prayer, Allah will join him, and any person who severs the row, Allah will sever him.”² Similarly, he said about following the Imam: “When one of you lifts his head (for example in “ruku”) before the Imam (lifting his head), does not he fear the time when Almighty Allah will make his head the head of an ass.”³

- d) This general ordinance of performing the Prayer under the commands of an Imam is locality based. That is, the objective of this ordinance is that all the inhabitants of the locality should perform the Prayer at their local mosque five times a day. However, the Islamic Law does not stop here but goes a step farther and instructs that all the inhabitants of the city should gather in one central mosque and perform the congregational Prayer under one Imam and that Prayer is the Friday Prayer. The importance and greatness of this Prayer has been clearly stated in *Surat al-Jum'a* (Chapter 62 of the Quran), which is that the Muslim Brotherhood can fulfil its obligated duty only when it retains its ideological and practical system in its real splendour and one of the things on which this depends is the establishment of the Friday Prayer. If the Muslims do not discharge their duty in respect of the Friday Prayer, they can also come under the range of the Divine Law which had caused the ruination of the previous brotherhoods (particularly the Jews). A similar warning has also been given by the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) in this behalf. He has said: “People should desist from giving up the Friday Prayer,

¹ Muslim, Vol. 1.

² Abu Dawood, Vol. 1.

³ Muslim, Vol. 1.

otherwise inevitably Allah will seal their hearts and then they will become oblivious of the Truth.”¹

- e) Whatever has been instructed to recite in the Prayer are mostly in plural number: For example: “*Thee (alone) we worship.*” “*Thee (alone) we ask for help.*” “*Show us the Straight Path.*” “*O our Lord, all praises are for thee alone.*” “*Peace be on us and on the righteous servants of Allah.*” &c. It means that as it has been ordained to outwardly assemble and line-up for the Prayer, similarly it has been instructed to keep alive mentally the sense of unity and concord.

Without following the aforesaid etiquette, the Prayer becomes unacceptable. Evidently, all these are collective forms of etiquette and their objective is nothing but to make the Prayer a source of sense of collectivism and discipline. A Muslim should not forget the fact that he is a part of the Brotherhood even when he is fully turned towards Almighty Allah, and in the moments of being in the Divine Audience he should not perceive himself to be such an individual who is detached from all other Believers in respect of his duties, objective of life and interests, and that he need not have any relationship with them in the discharge of his duties and achievement of his objectives and interests or does not believe it necessary to have any such relationship. As against this, even through his supplications and beseeches he manifests the fact that he keeps in his view the preservation of his individuality and also the unforgettable relationship with the Brotherhood. He is not a land traveller that he can reach his destination alone; rather, he is a marine traveller who can, generally, land on the coast of his objective only along with his fellow travellers.

Now keep in view all the aforesaid collective forms of etiquette of the Prayer and the objective behind them and gauge the power and strength with which the spirit of collectivism has been incorporated in this act of worship, and

¹ Muslim, Vol. 1.

how great the status of collectivism looks. But this estimation will not be correct and complete until the relationship between the fundamental objective of the Prayer and its etiquette is also not kept in view. The actual objective of the Prayer is to be present in the Audience of Allah and His remembrance, and the spirit of remembrance is the humility and submissiveness of the heart. Both of these are the known facts. Now just contemplate which place is most suitable to achieve this real objective: secluded place or a gathering? Which is required to get engrossed in the remembrance of Allah: tranquillity of seclusion or commotion of crowd? Where can one achieve with ease the humility of heart: in a deserted environment or a chaotic place? No doubt there will be only one answer to these questions. Everyone will say that remembrance of Allah requires complete concentration of heart, and complete concentration of heart demands tranquillity of seclusion. Now, on the one hand, keep in view this real objective of the Prayer and also the required forms of achieving this objective, and on the other hand, listen to the ordinances of the Islamic Law that for the obligated Prayers congregation is mandatory and that performing them alone is an unpardonable crime. Then the congregation should not be a casual one; it should be most disciplined – it is necessary to line-up and to keep the rows straight as an arrow; it is necessary that people stand joined together; it is necessary for one person to lead the Prayer and the others to follow him; on the command of the Imam, it is necessary for everyone to stand up together, bow together, sit together, prostrate together and end the Prayer together. Outwardly, it looks strange that the establishment of the Prayer rests on such etiquette and conditions which frequently causes interruption in the concentration of heart and internal submissiveness. It is worth contemplation why this has been done, and why the things which cause interruption in the real objective of the Prayer have not only been tolerated but have been made mandatory? After this contemplation whatever conclusion you may reach, it will inevitably include one fact that the keeping alive and strengthening the sense of organized collectivism amongst the Muslims was very dear to Islam, so dear that even at the practical possibility of having difficulties

in the achievement of the real objective of the Prayer, it gave preference to keeping alive and strengthening this sense of collectivism.¹ No doubt it is also a proof that keeping alive the sense of organized collectivism in the Muslim Community in itself is a subordinate objective.²

¹ Hence, the Islamic scholars are unanimous on this issue that even if a person achieves full submissiveness while performing the Prayer in seclusion and while performing it in congregation he loses his concentration, still it will not be right for him to perform the Prayer in seclusion giving up praying in congregation. Only one Islamic scholar, Imam Ghazali, has differed from it. That is, he has given preference to submissiveness over the congregation; but no importance is given to this lone opinion. (See the footnote on page 96 of the Mishkat)

² It should be remembered at this juncture that if there is the possibility of interruption and difficulty in achieving the real objective of the Prayer (remembrance of Allah), the Islamic Law not left this matter unattended but has suggested ways and means to compensate it. While it has mandated the obligated Prayers to be performed in congregation with such strict forms of collective etiquette, it has also exhorted the people to perform the Prayers other than the obligated Prayers at home rather than in the mosques. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has instructed: "*O people, pray at home because the best Prayer is that which man prays at home, except the obligated Prayers.*" (Bukhari, Vol. 1) Hence, it was the practice of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) that he used to pray the Sunnat and Supererogatory Prayers at his home. The most important wisdom behind this instruction and practice of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) is that full concentration can be achieved in the seclusion of home. Hence, home is the most suitable place to achieve the real objective of the Prayer. In this manner, the supererogatory Prayers performed at home remove the possible deficiency which might occur in the achievement of internal submissiveness during the course of performing obligated Prayers in congregation.

If you look at the benefits of the Prayer collectively, you will find it to be a composition of complete internal and external good. Internally if it bestows man with the Divine Audience, externally it bestows with the etiquette of collectivism, unity and discipline. Although today the followers of Islam might generally have forgotten about these benefits, there was a time when even the enemies of Islam were not unaware of it. Historians write that "when Rustam (the renowned Iranian General) saw the Muslims gathering in the battlefield for the Prayer, he screamed: "*Umar is eating away my liver; he is teaching etiquette to the dogs.*" (Muqaddima Ibn Khaldun)

(ii) The Zakat

The most important act of worship after the Prayer is the Zakat. Payment of Zakat is one of the two criteria which politically decides about a non-Muslim if he has truly entered the sphere of Islam or not. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said in this regard as follows:

"Allah has mandated Zakat on the Muslims which is collected from their rich and returned (distributed) to their poor."¹

We understand two things from the aforesaid Saying. One is that the one aspect (external aspect) of the objective of this important act of worship is towards economic interests of the Islamic society, i.e. the objective for which it has been mandated also includes that the indigent of the Brotherhood are not left without any help and assistance while facing financial difficulties and hardship. The second aspect of this worship is that Zakat is to be collected from the rich Muslims and distributed amongst the poor and indigent Muslims; it is not to be understood that the rich Muslims should individually calculate and take out the amount of Zakat from their wealth and distribute among the poor. The words "*to be collected and distributed*" in the aforesaid Saying requires that there has to be an authority which necessarily should discharge the duty of collection and distribution. Evidently, this authority could be the State, as can be gathered from the words of the Holy Quran "*And those employed to administer the (funds of Zakat)*"² and the practice of the era of Prophet Muhammad and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. The importance of a Muslim depositing the Zakat with the Government can be gauged from the fact that when during the era of Caliph Abu Bakr, some people refused to pay the Zakat, he declared war against them and very determinedly said:

¹ Muslim, Vol. 1.

² The Quran, 9:60.

"By Allah, if these people refuse to give even the rope used to tie the feet of the camel which they used to give to the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), I shall wage war against them."¹

Keep in view these two ordinances of the Islamic Law; it will become quite evident that this act of worship too has been made a source of collectivism. On the one hand, it includes in its objectives showing kindness and benevolence to others, which is a very important foundation stone of pious collectivism, and on the other hand, it has connected this act of worship with the system of governance, which is the most complete form of collectivism. This it has done in spite of the fact that it could be unbefitting with the fundamental objective of Zakat. The real objective of Zakat is the purification of the soul ("Of their goods take alms, so that you might purify and sanctify them"²) in order to achieve the good pleasure of Allah ("But only the desire to seek for the Countenance of their Lord Most High"³). It is quite evident that this objective demands that Zakat is paid to the indigent by the rich themselves and that too it is given in such a fashion that the left hand should not know what the right hand has given and to whom it has given. Otherwise, the apprehension of affecting the sincerity and godliness of paying Zakat openly and that too under the authority and organization of the State is an undeniable factor. It means that Islam has manifested its love for collectivism through its system of Zakat as it has done in the case of the Prayers, because here also it has given preference to the exigencies of collectivism even at the apprehension and possibility of affecting the real and fundamental objective of the worship.

(iii) The Fasting

The third act of worship is Fasting. This is a "negative" kind of worship. That is, unlike the Prayers, Zakat and Hajj, in this act

¹ Muslim, Vol. 1, Kitabul Eimaan.

² The Quran, 9:103.

³ The Quran, 92:20.

of worship nothing is done which can be seen; rather, some actions are desisted from. Evidently, it is difficult to give a shape of collectivism to the deed which is negative in nature, and it is even more difficult to make it a source of cultivating and developing the sense of collectivism. But it is quite evident from the ordinances pertaining to the Fasting given by Islam that it has made even this negative act of worship the "guide" and "teacher" of collectivism. It is ordained that all the Muslims should fast in a specific month; every day eat their last meal before daybreak and break their fast at the specific time in the evening. The environment created as a result of these ordinances is that the entire Islamic society gets converted into a month-long training camp; a uniform environment of devotedness is found everywhere, and a uniform sense of discipline is manifested from the face of every individual. Will the perception of being the standard-bearers of one mission and soldiers of one front not arise quite often in the minds of the individuals of that society which is covered continuously for one month with a unique uniform mental environment and uniform external state and which has been converted into a month-long training camp?

No doubt, making a negative form of worship an expression of collectivism is the proof of extreme love for collectivism.

(iv) The Hajj

Now take into consideration the Hajj, the fourth act of worship. The objective of Hajj is that the devotee and the faithful servant of the only one Allah should present himself at His House which is the centre of monotheism, where the true standards of Allah's adoration impart lessons of devotion, and which is the embodied memorial of the greatest monotheist, Hazrat Ibrahim Khaleelullah. A Muslim should go there so that he could see for himself, both from his eyes and the vision of his heart, the practical explanation of *La ilaha illallah* (There is no God except Allah), and then return back home to become

active in the practical field of servitude with renewed vigour and the true passion of devotion towards Allah.

The greatest rite of the rites of this worship is attendance in the field of Arafat. Here millions of Muslims gather, who come from different parts of the world belonging to different races, nations, colours and speaking different languages. They all gather under a Leader (Imam) who addresses the entire gathering and advises them about the facts of Faith, requirements of Islam and the etiquette of servitude of Allah. The Hajj of the person who does not attend this gathering is not complete, even if he has performed all other rites of the Hajj very diligently.

It is understood from this that Hajj has also been moulded to a large extent into the mould of collectivism and has been made a strong source to raise the consciousness of collectivism.

If you ponder, you will find that as in the case of other acts of worship, the achievement of the objective of the Hajj is independent of collectivism; rather, in some aspects it could be unfavourable, because the tranquillity of seclusion than the chaotic atmosphere of a huge gathering provides a better opportunity for man to renew his Faith through Ka'ba and the Signs of Allah found in its surroundings. But in spite of this fact, the Islamic Law says that Hajj cannot be performed without a gathering. In other words, it says that Hajj does not lag behind the other acts of worship in impressing on the mind the religious importance of collectivism; rather, in some aspects it is quite ahead of them.

The essential details about the etiquette of collectivism which Islam instructs to be followed in the acts of worship have been placed before you, and so also you have read about the importance of these etiquette. After this, you will be forced to admit that it is practically impossible to go beyond the extent to which the spirit of collectivism has been incorporated in these acts of worship.

This is an appraisal of different segments of the Islamic teachings from the viewpoint of collectivism. After this appraisal, it will not be wrong to say that the example of the loftiest position that Islam grants to the collectivism cannot be found in any other religion or system of life.

THE REASON FOR ITS IMPORTANCE

THE FEARFUL RESULTS OF UNORGANIZED LIFE

Collectivism is essential for Islam as water is essential for fish; this is the fact that has come to light from the previous discussions. One should ponder why is it so? Why Islam gives such extraordinary importance to collectivism? Why it insists upon its followers to lead a collective life? Why it declares essential establishment of an organised political system? Why it declares obedience of the head of this system as obedience of Allah and His Prophet, and his disobedience as the disobedience of Allah and His Prophet? Why it removes its collar from the neck of that person who moves away from the al-Jamat even to the extent of a span of hand, and takes away its protection from the person who tries to break the communal unity? Why it considers the death of the person who has not sworn allegiance to the caliphate as the death of Ignorance? The necessity for this contemplation and research is quite evident. In such kinds of important issues, the common human intellect never gets satisfied with the answer "What it is." It gets satisfied when it understands "Why is it so." Hence, even though this fact is quite evident, to obtain a correct place in the minds, it demands that its reasons and wisdom are also brought into view.

It should be very clear in this regard that collectivism plays a very singular role in the fulfilment of the objective of Islam and serves the interests of the Faith and Religion, because if it were not so, it would never have given it such an extraordinary importance. Therefore, the thing that is to be pondered upon and researched is how it takes part in fulfilling the objective of Islam and what services it renders to the interests of Religion and Faith. When we refer back to the Islamic sources – which one is bound to do – to investigate this issue, we get the following answer:

"You must stick on to the al-Jamat, because the wolf will be able to eat only that sheep which strays away."¹

"Satan is the wolf for man, similar to that wolf which catches the sheep that runs away or goes far away or moves away in a different direction."²

"You must stick on to the al-Jamat and beware of division, because Satan is with a single person and he is far away from two."³

That is, sticking on to a collective system is essential because it safeguards the religious life. Without this collectivism, the religious life of a Muslim gets endangered, because in such a situation he will be within the range of Satan's ambush from where he can easily hunt him. On the other hand, the community collectivism is such an ironclad protection which Satan cannot easily penetrate and target a Believer.

Although this answer which we get from the Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) is quite brief, but it is enough to solve the question under discussion, because this brevity is not such as to itself become an issue. Rather, this is such a brevity to explain which the entire philosophy of Religion, the whole system of Islam and the entire history of the Muslim Brotherhood is available. When you study this philosophy, this system and this history, you will find that the nonexistence of the required Islamic collectivism severely endangers the Faith and Religion of the Muslim not from one or two aspects, but from three aspects.

(1) PATRONIZING ENVIRONMENT FOR FALSEHOOD

The environment free of Islamic collectivism is more conducive in favour of false ideologies, bad deeds and wrong

¹ Abu Dawood.

² Musnad Ahmed as reported in Mishkat.

³ Tirmizi, Vol. 2, Kitab al-Fitan.

values than true ideologies, good deeds and true values, because of which it is not easy to walk on the path of religiosity and God-fearing. This is a very clear reality which needs no explanation or proof. Only a slight contemplation in this regard is enough to understand that the environment for the required Islamic ideologies, deeds, ethics and values will not remain favourable where the required Islamic collectivism does not exist. What is the meaning of Islamic collectivism? It is nothing but establishment of such a united and organised society which has been bounded by the Rope of Allah; whose singular particularity is enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong; whose every individual member not only himself tries to become a pious person, but considers a religious duty to make others pious too; whose general atmosphere is clean from wrongdoings and evil deeds; in which the criteria for honour and dignity is God-fearing; and taking lead and helping each other in the performance of good deeds is its particularity. It is quite evident that in such a society, it is easy for a sensitive Muslim to become pious and difficult to be a wrongdoer. In other words, for him it would be similar to walk on a flat surface. Even that person will, on the whole, remain protected from wrongdoings whose sensitivity of Faith and ethics is of a lower degree, because the environment continuously attracts him towards good deeds and takes him away from evil deeds. This naturally results in the domination of godliness and goodness on the ideology and practice.

On the contrary, the nonexistence of Islamic collectivism means an environment where there would be Muslims but they will not have their society, and if a society is to be found, it would be devoid of any organization and collective system, and if there is to be an organization and collective system, it would not be a Quranic and Islamic system. No doubt, such an environment can never be the one which likes the good and dislikes the wrong; the domination of Islamic values cannot be established here; and the impetus for evil will be found everywhere. In such circumstances, it would be very difficult for a Muslim to become pious and very easy to become impious. Here, to remain Muslim it would not be as easy as walking on a flat surface; rather, it would be as if

climbing a hill. This will certainly result in the Muslims, on the whole, going away from the passion for godliness and goodness.

(2) ONSET OF INEVITABLE DEFECTS IN RELIGIOUS ADHERENCE

The other thing is that in such an environment a Muslim, to a certain extent, inevitably gets disconnected from Islam. This fact cannot remain hidden from any person who knows what Islam is and for what purpose Muslim has been sent on this earth. When you take into view the entire system of Religion of Islam, you will clearly see that in the event of nonexistent of Islamic collectivism, a Muslim remains disconnected with Islam in respect of the following aspects.

- a) The most important thing is that a Muslim cannot fulfil all the rights of Allah. In other words, he will not be in a position to fulfil many important requirements and demands of the servitude of Allah. What would be the most important obligated duty than bearing witness of Islam and its establishment? This is the obligated duty which is the objective of a Muslim's existence. Similarly, what would be the most lovable deed in the Sight of Allah than striving (Jihad) in the Cause of Allah, which in the Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has been expressly and clearly declared to be the loftiest deed, and the bosom bereft of its passion has been declared as the bosom of a hypocrite. Deprived of the collective system of life, is there any other way in which he can discharge these obligated duties? It is quite obvious that he cannot. Leave aside these issues; take those commandments of Islam regarding which there is no difference of opinion about they being "the acts of worship" and "the rights of Allah" even as far as their wordings are concerned. The Prayer, the Zakat and the Hajj cannot be performed in that excellent manner in which Allah and His Prophet (pbuh) want to see them being

performed. In the presence of these realities, how is it possible that in the event of the nonexistence of the collectivism required by Islam, the rights of Allah get saved from destruction?

- b) This will be the fate of the rights of Allah's servants too. It would become extremely difficult for a Muslim to help the needy, protect the oppressed, take care of the sick, attend the funeral of the deceased, and on the whole, fulfil all the rights of his fellow human beings without the existence of the Islamic collective system of life. The extent to which the life of a Muslim gets distanced from this collective system, to that extent the availability of these opportunities get lesser and lesser, so much so that if this distance and separation reaches its last limits, even these opportunities get extinct.
- c) The ethical environment will not be any different. The importance of good manners and ethics in Islam is quite evident. In a way, it is the gist of Islam. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said: "*I have been sent to perfect the good ethics and manners.*"¹ Such an important thing too cannot fully manifest itself in an unorganized system of life, so much so that when the unorganized life reaches its last stage and assumes the individualistic hue, many of the Islamic ethics and attributes like truthfulness, honesty, piety, modesty, fulfilling the promises, benevolence, love, mercy, sacrifice, patience, constancy, seriousness, mild nature, eloquence, broad-mindedness, etc. just remain perceptions, because most of them are related to the mutual relationships and dealings of the human beings. Popularly, ethics is defined as that attitude which one person or group adopts with another person or group. Now, if a person were to go and live in such a place where he is not in touch with another person, how would he be able to fulfil these

¹ Muatta.

requirements of Islam? Similarly, where there is no organized society and a complete collective system, what would be the thing that will make a Muslim demonstrate the collective and international ethics of Islam?

- d) As far as the general civilized and societal life of the Muslims is concerned, this situation deeply and adversely affects it, because in such a situation, the un-Islamic principles take root in place of the Islamic principles and they exit gradually from many segments of life. This is a known reality. It is quite obvious that if a Muslim has not gone and taken shelter in a cave and lives in the colonies and inhabitations, in the event of nonexistence of the required Islamic collective system, inevitably he will be living in a non-Islamic system of life, and living in such a non-Islamic system means nothing but the Muslim is leading his life, at least in respect of major collective matters, on non-Islamic lines; rather, it can be safely assumed that even the sacredness of his personal laws cannot be assured.

The practical severance from Islam from so many angles and to such an extent cannot be construed as an ordinary thing, and nor can you consider use of "severance from Islam" and the "onset of inevitable defects in religious adherence" as harsh words in describing the situation. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has described women as "*deficient in Religion*" and the reason he ascribed to it is that "*when they are in their monthly periods, neither can they perform the Prayers nor can they fast ...and that is the deficiency of their Religion.*"¹ Now just ponder, when a woman not praying or fasting just for a few days in a month is considered a deficiency of her Religion, then imagine the degree of deficiency of that Religion where the Muslims cannot act upon many important and different ordinances of Islam in their entire lives. Moreover, the aforesaid condition of a woman is a natural and inborn

¹ Bukhari, Kitab al-Haidh.

condition which cannot be stopped from occurring or if it has occurred, it is not possible for the woman to terminate it at her will, and therefore, she cannot be held responsible for it in any manner whatsoever. On the contrary, the condition of the Muslims who live separately from the collective system or are deprived of it is not even compulsive leave alone it being natural and inborn; rather, quite often they themselves are responsible for creating it or maintaining it. In such a situation, will it be wrong to say their religion as "defective and deficient"? Will it be wrong to declare them as "disconnected from Religion" where they are unable to act upon certain ordinances of Islam because of living in an unorganized and non-collective system of life? Justice demands that not only their Religion be declared as "defective" but "the most defective" Religion; they be considered not only "disconnected with the Religion to a certain extent," but declare them to be answerable in certain situations.

(3) CONTINUOUS DECLINE OF RELIGIOUS SENSITIVITY

Another calamity that occurs in the non-collective life is that the untruth continuously assaults the religious sensitivity and the sense of honour of the Faith until they become lifeless. The untruth gets this opportunity because of the political power it gets over the Muslims who are deprived of Islamic collectivism. As has been described above, the nonexistence of the required Islamic collectivism and the organized system inevitably means that the Muslims are living under a non-Islamic system, i.e. under a system which runs on the foundations of untruth; where the supreme authority and the legislator is not Allah but someone else; where the perception of the vicegerency of man is fundamentally considered as an unconstitutional perception; where the collective values of ethics have been sourced from the sources other than the Book of Allah and the Traditions of the Prophet; where the Muslims do not have the right to offer guidance in respect of wider collective matters; where the decision of the Islamic Law is not final in determining the "good" (*ma'ruf*) and the

"wrong" (*munkar*), where many "good" have been declared as wrong and many "wrong" have been declared as good; where the foundations of human and international relationships have been raised not on Islamic principles of justice and cooperation in righteousness but on the material interests of a particular nation, race, country, group or any ism; where the courts are not bound to adjudicate on the basis of Islamic Law; and where the Muslims are not free to even act according to the Islamic Law and principles in respect of their individual matters.

Imagine what would be the psychological condition of a Muslim in such an environment? What would be its condition in the beginning and what it turns out to be in the end? No doubt, seeing this situation, his religious pride will get agitated; he will feel suffocated and will find himself as if buried in the deep pit of filth. However, it is also obvious that even the most refined person if confined into a filthy and stinking room will feel uneasy only for a period of time, and with the passage of time the uneasiness gets weakened and a time will come when his sense of smell begins to bear with the stench and he will consider it a stench only ideologically and a thing to be abhorred, but practically he will not abhor it.

A person who has even a little knowledge of psychology will certainly reach this conclusion. You can say that it is one of the incontrovertible principles of psychology. It is quite obvious that the principles of psychology do not change in respect of Religion. If you like you can exempt a few individuals out of the group of millions, but the evidence of experience and observation says that it applies on more than 99 per cent of the people. That is, it so happens that when the Muslim Brotherhood allows the non-Islamic system to dominate it after losing its collectivism or loosening its fastening, at that time the Muslims will feel that as if they are lying on burning coals and as if all around them incendiary bombs are exploding. They will try to escape from this situation. But it is quite obvious that the system which has acquired the political power and has occupied all the segments of the collective life, will not give it up just because

of this mental rebellion. It will, as usual, continue to rule with firmness and determination, and in spite of the Brotherhood being a Muslim Brotherhood it will continue to rule over it under those ideals, ideologies and ordinances and laws which its un-Islamic nature and political exigencies demand. At last, slowly the eyes get accustomed to this state of affair; fatigue first sets in on the restlessness of emotions and the mental rebellion, and then sets in the dejection; anxiety turns into sense of grief, and the fire of rebellion gets converted into ashes. This period also ends; thereafter the religious sense of honour begins to exit from the hearts; the temperaments begin to adapt with things un-Islamic; the mental and emotional struggle begins to turn into reconciliation and acquiescence and there will not remain any Muslim opposition to things un-Islamic.

Thereafter, the fourth and last period arrives when those un-Islamic things which were considered very bad will become "the good." The Muslim will salute that system and rule which had either expelled their religion or had imprisoned it, he will seek honour in its audience, he will feel proud to serve it, and he will ever be ready to become a sycophant. He will be a "Muslim," but he will never express even his disagreement with the non-Islamic system of life. Man is the vicegerent of Allah; he is mandated to run the system of the world according to the Will and ordinances of Allah; Allah alone is the Supreme Authority and Legislator; Islam is a complete system of life; success in the world and salvation in the Hereafter depend on following this system; these and many other such lofty statements will be frequently made in religious gatherings, but in the wider practical field of the world, the Muslim Brotherhood would keep on running the train of its life on the rail of that "ism" which the country's non-Islamic system and the infidel political power would have made its "religion." The present condition of the Brotherhood is the living proof of this reality and this requires no further theoretical and ideological proof. Listen to this most clear evidence with consciousness and figure out how the un-Islamic political power and system of life can assault on the religious sensitivity and sense of honour of Faith, and with its

continuous assaults how it can put it into a near-death condition or even the condition of death itself.

Just ponder; how long a Muslim can remain a true Muslim when the life deprived of Islamic collectivism keeps on assaulting his Religion and Faith and puts him into such great dangers? Hence, one has to agree that this one strategy of Satan of depriving the Muslims of the Islamic collective system of life is more effective than his thousands of strategies. If the Satan wants to hunt all the Muslims individually, he has to dig as many pits. But if he digs one pit of chaotic and unorganized life, it would be enough for the entire Brotherhood. Therefore, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has told the truth when he declared the Muslims who live separately from the "al-Jamat" or have been deprived of it as the helpless and easy victims of Satan; this description is such that no other description can fit the situation.

THE INVALUABLE FRUITS OF COLLECTIVE LIFE

Non-collective life creates extreme risks for the Religion and Faith of the Muslims and makes them an easy victim of Satan. However, let us try to know what the Muslims gain from a collective life. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) says:

"The Hand of Allah is upon the al-Jamat."¹

That is, the collective life is that life in which the Muslims become entitled for Allah's Mercies and Assistance.

If questioned, why it is so; this would be a superfluous question, because if those are the practical results of non-collective life which we have just described, it means that the fruits of the collective life will be quite opposite to them.

If the society which is deprived of the required Islamic collectivism cultivates evil ideologies and practices and

¹ Tirmizi, Vol. 2.

destroys the good ideologies and practices because of which treading on the path of righteousness and God-fearing becomes harder and harder, the society which is bestowed with the Islamic collectivism would bring into existence quite a different situation; it will cultivate righteous ideologies and practices; will stop development of un-Islamic ideologies and practices; will exhort piety and righteousness, because of which people will voluntarily get attracted towards piety and God-fearing. Similarly, if the Muslim is forced to follow his Religion in a defective manner in the former society, he will not have such an impediment in this society. In the same manner if his religious sense and sense of honour of Faith is continuously assaulted in that society, he will not have to face such a situation in this society. To sum up, a collective system of life is that system in which the Muslims can obey and serve their Lord without any let or hindrance, and Almighty Allah wants nothing more than His servants fully obeying and serving Him. This is His demand and His Good Pleasure lies in it. Hence, it is established that the fulfilment of the Will of Allah depends on the right type of collective system of life, and when it is so, this collective life must be loved by Allah, and evidently Allah bestows His Mercies and Benevolences on the thing which He loves. It is clear from the above that only under a correct collective life alone, the Religion and Faith get fully cultivated and developed, and the success in the world and in the Hereafter is assured. Ponder; how invaluable are these fruits of the collective system of life, and how important is this collective life for Islam and the Muslims.

THE ISSUE OF HERMITS

At this juncture, some occurrences might create confusion in the mind. Hence, it is essential to clear it.

The confusion might be that there are many pious religious personalities whose lives do not support this supposition. On the contrary, they prove that one can achieve the loftiest status of servitude and godliness even by severing

from collective life, because in spite of leading a secluded life, Satan could not harm or induce them.

The answer to this confusion is that there will always be exceptions to a general rule or conception. When it is said that a particular conception gives such and such result, it generally does not mean that there cannot be any other result. Rather, this is said keeping in view the generality of the situation; it means that it generally happens so. Hence, when it is said that Satan very easily brings one into his clutches who separates himself from collective life, it has been said in this known manner of expression of facts, and it means that it generally happens so. Hence, while there are occurrences which bear witness that some persons have become very pious in spite of separating themselves from the collective life, there are far more occurrences which pronounce that as against these "some" individual there have been "millions" of individuals who were not able to protect even the fundamentals of their Religion after getting deprived of the collective life, and got nearer to Satan than Allah. Now just see what would be the balance sheet of profit and loss, and what would be the result of existence and non-existence of collective life in respect of the Muslim Brotherhood.

As far as the ordinances of Islam are concerned, they have been issued keeping in view common man and general conditions and realities and not keeping in view particular conditions and exceptions. Therefore, the ordinance pertaining to lead a collective life has been given keeping in view common man, and it has been described keeping in view general conditions and situations. It is quite obvious that when it ordains something, it becomes obligatory both on commonality and the elite, because the ordinances of the Islam Law are for everyone without any distinction, and any individual, however gifted he might be, cannot be given any exception in this regard.

Moreover, this objection is basically wrong. It is true that people have reached lofty status in godliness remaining away from collective life. But this cannot be a proof against the

importance and beneficence of collective life, because this does not prove that these people could not have reached even higher status of godliness by remaining within the collective life. As against this, it is a fact that these gentlemen would have reached even loftier status if they had the assistance and beneficence of correct system of collective life. In the seclusion they might have reached the status of the angels, but if they had lived in the assembly of Islamic collectivism, they would have reached the status of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar. Summing up, it is clear that living away from the collective life a person can become anything, but cannot become that standardised human being whom Allah has made him His vicegerent and before whom the angels had been ordained to bow.

ISLAMIC COLLECTIVISM

OBJECTIVE OF COLLECTIVISM

Every organized collective system of the world will have a determined objective. Rather, it can be said that organizations and collective systems are formed by determined objectives. Therefore, collectivism by itself is not the object; rather, it is the means of achieving the determined objective, and its importance is ascertained on the basis of its objective. If a system is expected to achieve its desired objective, it should be given more importance than it deserves. But if it is not so, then however strong and organized it might be, it is not of much value.

If this is true in respect of other collective systems and organizations, it should be true with regard to Islam's required collectivism and it cannot remain just a perception. Therefore, intellect says that the collectivism, the unity and the organization which Islam has ordained for its followers cannot be just a sort of collectivism, a disorderly unity and a superficial organization. Rather, it would be a particular kind of collectivism, a particular type of unity and an objective organization. There would certainly be a fixed and determined objective for which people have been ordained to lead a collective and organized life. Moreover, this objective alone would decide whether any collectivism and organization is Islamic or not. If it can become the means to achieve that objective, then it would have the right to be declared as the Islamic collectivism and the organization liked by Allah and His Prophet (pbuh), and it would be given that religious importance which has been pointed out in the previous and ensuing pages. However, if the facts on the ground belie this and if this organization of the Muslims does not seem to be marching towards its objective and goal, it loses its right to be called the Islamic collectivism, nor will it be considered as obedience of religious ordinances given in respect of collectivism and organization. And, God forbid, if this Muslim

organization were to have such a setup which harms the objective of the Islamic collectivism and fulfils the objective of some other organization, then it would be a curse for Islam. Such an organization should be disbanded and in its place that organization should be built which fulfils the objective of Islamic collectivism.

What is the objective for which Islam has mandated its followers to lead an organized collective life? The answer to this question is found in the answer to another question: What is the objective obligated duty of the followers of Islam as a Brotherhood? Because the objective and obligated duty of a brotherhood is the thing for which it becomes a brotherhood and adopts a united and organized form. Therefore, when we find out the objective and the obligated duty of the Muslim Brotherhood, it will define the objective of the required Islamic collectivism. The Holy Quran says in this regard:

"Thus, have We made of you an Ummat (Brotherhood) justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations." (2:143)

"You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong." (3:110)

"The same Religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah – that which We have sent by inspiration to thee – and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: namely, that you should establish the Religion." (42:13)

The three things mentioned in the aforesaid Verses: (1) Bearing witness; (2) Enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong; (3) Establishing the Religion define just one meaning and fact, and the difference in their wordings shows three different directions of this one meaning.

It is very clear from the above Verses of the Quran that the objective and duty for which the Muslim Brotherhood has

been raised as a group and a brotherhood is the establishment of the Religion of Islam, bearing witness of the Truth and enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong. Hence, the objective of the Islamic collectivism is also nothing but establishment of the Religion, bearing witness of the Truth and enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong. This is the only thing for which the Muslims have been so strongly mandated to lead an organized collective life, and such extraordinary arrangements have been made to keep alive the consciousness of organized collectivism in them. In other words, the Muslims can never organize themselves for any other objective and their organization cannot become active for any other movement. As the disorganized and chaotic life for the Muslims is an un-Islamic life, similarly it is un-Islamic for them to organise and unite for any other objective except as the standard-bearers of Islam. Hence, as closer their organization and collective system would be with its objective, it would be Islamic to that extent, and as far away it would be from its objective, it would be un-Islamic to that extent, so much so that if this distance and disconnect happens to be fundamental, then it would entirely be un-Islamic; it would be just an un-Islamic organization led by the Muslims and it would be such a group which would not have the protection of Allah over them.

BINDER OF THE COLLECTIVE SYSTEM

The determination of the objective of the Islamic Collectivism also determines its binder too. If the only objective of this Collectivism is the establishment of Religion of Islam and bearing witness over other nations, then the pivot of this Collectivism can be only the Religion of Islam. Hence, while instructing the Muslims to live as a united and organized group, the Holy Quran instructs the Muslims in the following words:

"And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves." (3:103)

Whereas the aforesaid Verse is clear that the Muslims should live together, it also makes it clear that the thing that joins them together is the "rope of Allah." Hence, it is understood from this statement that to fulfil the ordinance of united and organized collectivism that the Holy Quran has given to the Muslims, it is inevitable that its every unit should join with its whole only on the basis of the Book of Allah and just for the sake of the Religion of Islam. Apart from this, there should not be any other basis which can join its different units.

To know further the purport of the aforesaid Divine instruction, we should see the practice of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) in this regard. This practice was nothing but the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) presented before the people the Religion of Islam, reminded them of the life in the Hereafter, and invited them towards the servitude of Allah, and he kept on doing this his entire Prophetic life. Whoever accepted this invitation, he became the member of the Islamic Community and its collective system irrespective of his race, nationality, colour and language, and whoever rejected it was not allowed to join this collective system even if he belonged to the noble tribes of Quraish or Bani Hashim. As the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) did not call the people towards anything else than the above, similarly he did not allow any other basis to join the Muslim Brotherhood than the above. Leave alone allowing such a thing, he has warned against forming such kinds of gatherings and groups in the strongest terms. Hence, after instructing the Muslims to remain completely connected with the "al-Jamat" i.e. the true Islamic collective system, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said:

"And whoever called the people towards the call of ignorance, his abode is Hell, even if he fasts, prays and regards himself a Muslim."¹

"Ignorance" is the opposite of Islam. This fact is as clear as the fact that polytheism is opposite of monotheism. Therefore, every call will be the call of ignorance which is not

¹ Ahmed, Tirmizi, as reported in Mishkat, Kitab al-Amaara.

Islamic, which the Quran does not declare as the call of Truth, which has not been made by the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and which Islam does not certify. Islam has instructed its followers to lead an organized collective life; it abhors unorganized life. In such a situation, if a person invites people to adopt an unorganized life, it is clearly a call towards ignorance. Similarly, the Quran has advised the Muslims to get bounded by the binder of "the Rope of Allah." Hence, if the call is given to get united on the basis of some other relationship, it would be a call of ignorance whether such relationship is based on blood, nationality, language, colour, etc. Therefore, the application of the fearful warning that has been given in the aforesaid Saying is as wide as the sphere of the "Ignorance" and in this sphere where many other things are included, it also includes, which is perhaps the most prominent, inviting the Muslims to gather on such a "word," bind in such a relationship, and assemble on a centre which is not Islamic, i.e. Islam has not acknowledged it to be the fundamental and real basis for differentiating between mankind.

On another occasion, to explain this fact further, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said:

"He is not one among us who invited people towards any bias."¹

"Invited towards any bias": That is, instead of gathering the Muslims on the basis of the Islamic principles of collectivism tries to gather them on any one of the racial, national, linguistic or any other biases on which the godless and materialistic minded nations generally gather.

This Saying of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) also proves that Islam and "call towards any bias" cannot coexist.

Anyhow, the call of ignorance and the call of bias are filth which the exquisite disposition of Islam cannot tolerate even for a moment. Hence, whenever any Muslim uttered such biased words because of Satanic instigation, the Prophet of

¹ Abu Dawood, Kitab al-Adab.

Allah (pbuh) took immediate notice of it and never delayed even for a moment to remove the effects of this filth from the minds of the Muslims. During the course of the Battle of Bani Mustalaq, a quarrel ensued between a Migrant (Muhajir) and a Helper (Ansaa)r and the Migrant kicked the back of the Helper. The Helper called the Helpers: "O Helpers, come to my help." The Migrant also called the Migrants: "O Migrants, come to my help." When the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) heard this, he said:

"What is this call of ignorance? Be away from it, because it is a very filthy thing."¹

It is obvious that the aforesaid words, which are actually the slogans of ignorance, were uttered on the occasion of a momentary quarrel and they were not uttered under the influence of any specific ideology and were not an invitation for the formation of a permanent collective system. Still the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) disliked them as if they were not mere words but stinking filthy matter which should not come out of any Muslim, and which the finer religious sense can never tolerate.

If the person who invites towards the "ignorance" and "bias" is worthless in the Islamic society and is a "fuel" for the hellfire, then the person who accepts this invitation cannot be the guest of the Paradise. Justice demands that his status should also be that of the person who invites towards ignorance and bias. Hence, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) after saying: "*He is not one among us who invited people towards any bias,*" also said:

"He is not one among us who fought under a bias, and he is not one among us who died for any bias."

Hence, apart from the Religion of Islam, there is no other worldly interest, relationship and commonality on the basis of which the Muslims can gather together and which can

¹ Bukhari, Vol. 2, Kitab al-Tafseer.

form the binder of the Islamic Collectivism. If the Muslims were to gather on such a thing, it can be called just a gathering but not an Islamic gathering. This is quite clear from the aforesaid arguments and proofs.

METHOD OF FORMING THE COLLECTIVE SYSTEM

Now only one aspect of the discussion remains and that is how this collective system comes into existence. Although we can guess the answer to this question keeping in view the discussion on the previous two issues, because of the importance of the issue it is better to base our arguments on the clear guidance of Islam rather than on guess and estimation. When we refer to the Holy Quran in this regard, we find that the comprehensive guidance that has been given to the Muslims in Chapter 3 with regard to leading an organised collective life has been commenced with the following words:

O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam. (3:102)

After this instruction, it has been instructed with the conjunction "and" *to hold fast to the rope of Allah*, which has been discussed in the previous pages. It clearly means that whatever has been said in these words is the first part of this instruction and whatever has been said later is its second part. Its existence depends upon the existence of the first part. That is, as the Islamic Collectivism cannot come into existence unless its binder is not Islam, similarly Islam cannot become the binder of the Islamic Collectivism as long as the Muslims are not firm believers in Islam, the fear of Allah is not embedded in their bosoms, and they do not actively obey Allah. This is the only essential condition to become a part of this Collectivism, to make anyone part of it and to remain a part of it. Without this, no person can become a member of this collective system nor can any person be made its member. The extent to which a person develops these attributes in him and strengthens them, to that extent he will be the best and

reliable part of this Collectivism and the extent to which one remains imperfect, to that extent his relationship with the Collectivism will be weak and unreliable.

Further, as this fact demands that only those people should be considered as members of this group who believe in Islam and vow to obey its ordinances, similarly it also demands that arrangements should be made to further cultivate these attributes in those people who have become its members. Therefore, the instructions of the Quran in this behalf do not end here, but continue further:

"Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong." (3:104)

Actually, this is the third and last part of this instruction, which in a way, is also the conclusion of the first part. Its objective is that the Jamat of the Muslims which comes into existence after their coming together on the pivot of "the rope of Allah" should essentially, within and outside its sphere, invite all towards the good, enjoin the right, and act as an impediment whenever they see the requirements of Islam, Faith and God-fearing getting trampled upon. In such a situation alone, it is expected that the members of this Jamat will retain those attributes in them which are necessary to obtain the membership of this Jamat. Hence, one of the duties of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) was purification of the soul. As he was responsible for calling the people towards the Truth, rehearse the Verses of Allah to those who accept it, and teach them the Book (ordinances of Allah) and the wisdom of the Religion (*"Rehearse Thy Signs to them and instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom"*¹), similarly he was responsible to rectify the defects found in the knowledge, practice and ethics of those who accepted his call (*"and sanctify them"*²). The actions of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) were never different from his prescribed duties. Hence, history bears witness that

¹ The Quran, 2:129.

² The Quran, 2, 129.

in the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood he was never satisfied with less than these criteria nor did he demanded more. He used to call people towards the servitude of Allah and make those people part of the Brotherhood who accepted his call and develop in them the qualities of Islam, Faith and God-fearing. This was the duty and practice of the Prophet which resulted in the birth of Islamic Collectivism and Muslim Brotherhood.

THE COMPLETE SHAPE OF ISLAMIC COLLECTIVISM (SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT)

THE INEVITABLE NECESSITY OF A GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

The zenith of the collectivism and its last goal is establishment of a system of government. This system in itself is not required, but practically it is an inevitable necessity of the human society, because as it is a fact that the members of the human race, by nature, are forced to live together, similarly it is also a fact that this collective living creates some problems which are to be solved. This is as essential as the lap of the mother and protection of the father for the child, because the problems, on the one hand, exist permanently and on the other hand they are important too. They exist permanently because their source is not external so that they appear and disappear now and then; rather, their source is man's inner circle. Actually, it is man's nature that gives birth to them. Therefore, as long as man does not free himself from his nature, which is quite impossible, these problems will essentially take birth and will remain permanently. They are "most important" as because of them the very purpose of collectivism gets lost; rather, you can say, they give undesirable practical results.

The details of this brief statement are that along with the powers of good, man also possesses the powers of evil. The entire human history bears witness to this and even the Holy Quran very clearly makes this pronouncement by saying that Allah inspired man's conscience with what is right and what is wrong: ("And inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it."¹). In the presence of this fact and man's inherent nature, when men live together, it creates that situation which we witness every moment of our lives. On the

¹ The Quran, 91:8.

one hand, we witness the attitudes of justice, mercy, compassion and selflessness, and on the other, we also witness the conflict of individual desires, interests and selfishness which results in commitment of oppression against each other, usurpation of rights, and the property and honour of the people being rendered unsafe and unsecured. It means that the collectivism which man had adopted thinking it to be a safe place for obtaining peace and tranquillity, would become a place of torture for him. In such a situation, logically he will have only two options. Either he has to give up collectivism or he has to find out a solution for this problem. He cannot adopt the first option, because neither his natural instincts will permit it, nor will his economic and defensive exigencies allow him to do so. Therefore, practically he will not have any other option except that he should have some permanent solutions to these permanent and important problems. In other words, he should have such an arrangement which can control the conflict of desires and interests and should develop such power which can restrain the oppressors and give protection to the weak and the oppressed and give them back their rights. Without any further discussion and proof, it can be said that only "government" can provide such arrangement and power. That is, it is the system of governance that can establish peace and justice in a society. This is a very clear and natural reality which cannot be denied unless one does not close his eyes to the realities of human nature. Ibn Khaldun did not exaggerate when he said that as man, by nature, is oriented towards collectivism, similarly he is in need of such a "ruler" and "restrainer" who can restrain different individuals of the society from committing excesses against each other.

Moreover, this system of government is not only an internal requirement, but is also an external requirement. Without this, it cannot protect its existence and interests, because as the weaknesses of human nature incite the individual members of the society to tyrannise each other, similarly different collective systems and nations also confront each other and no nation can remain complacent to the threat posed by other nations against it. In such a situation,

it is quite obvious that making arrangements for defence will be its most important duty. It is true that, when occasion arises, the individual members of the society have to discharge the responsibility of defence. But if the individuals are allowed to discharge this duty according to their individual opinions and in whatever manner and time they choose, success cannot be assured. No disorganized army has ever confronted successfully an organized assault. Therefore, however duty-conscious, courageous and proud might be the individuals, if they do not fight under an organised system, they cannot successfully defend the assaults made on them. In other words, every defence depends on the organization of a government. It should be remembered that this defence is one of those fundamental reasons which makes the collectivism an absolute necessity. Hence, establishment of a government is necessary for the very existence of collectivism.

ISLAM AND THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

The Muslim society is nothing but a human society, and is formed from those human beings who have been bestowed with the powers of good and evil and whose conscience is inspired with the good and the evil. Therefore, it is impossible for man to be free of their effects, because in spite of their love for piety and God-fearing, the Muslims remain just human beings and do not become super humans. Hence, the human weaknesses can exist, have existed and will exist in their society too. The Islamic criminal laws and the procedure prescribed to adjudicate criminal cases prove that Islam does not perceive that its followers will never commit any wrong and acts of oppression against each other; rather, it considers them to be just human beings whose nature is a mixture of good and evil, and who can commit mistakes. Therefore, as other societies need government organization and agencies to maintain law and order, similarly Islamic society cannot remain indifferent to such a system. Rather, it will be more particular to have such a system, because the importance that Islam gives to the inviolability of human life and property cannot be found in any other religion or ism.

As far as the requirement of defence is concerned, the Muslim society will need it as other societies need it, because as long as non-Islamic societies exist, there will always exist the possibility of the Islamic society being attacked by them. Hence, to protect and successfully defend itself, establishment of a government is essential.

If you look at the issues from any angle, the need of a government for an Islamic society is as essential and natural as for other societies.

ISLAMIC MANDATE FOR THE SYSTEM OF CALIPHATE

The necessity for the establishment of a government for the Muslim society has been made clear by the above discussion. But it is quite obvious that its foundation is totally intellectual and ideological, although the discussion is not about any worldly ideology but is about religious and Islamic perceptions. Therefore, it is essential to know about the instructions of the Islamic Law in this regard, and base our judgement upon it. Otherwise, it can be surmised that Islam might not have looked at the Muslim society from the viewpoint that has been made the basis for this opinion.

When you refer to the Islamic Law for this purpose, you will find clear instructions for the establishment of a government in (1) the Quran; (2) the Traditions of the Prophet; (3) model of the Prophet; (4) model of the Companions; and (5) the clear opinions of the Islamic scholars.

As far as the Holy Quran is concerned, it has, on the one hand, ordained the Muslims to obey those charged with authority (*"O you who believe, obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you."*¹), and on the other has charged them with the responsibility of promulgating many laws which cannot be promulgated

¹ The Quran, 4:59.

without the agencies of the government; for example, execution of a murderer, severance of the hand of a thief, lashing or stoning to death the fornicator, etc. These two things pronounce that the Quran considers a Muslim society a governed society and it does not perceive a Muslim society without a system of government. No doubt that the Quran has not used such words as: O Muslims establish such and such system of government, because it was not necessary to do so. When the Muslims are demanded that they should obey their men of authority and they are responsible to take action against the criminals, it clearly implies that they should establish a government and lead their lives under its system of governance. Hence, Imam Fakhruddin Razi, explaining the Verse ("As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands."¹) says:

"Muslim theologians have declared this Verse to be the proof that it is mandatory on the Muslim Brotherhood to appoint a designated Imam (Ruler). Their argument is that Almighty Allah has made mandatory through this Verse enforcement of the legal punishment on the thieves and fornicators. Therefore, there should be a person who is the direct addressee (and responsible for the enforcement) of this ordinance of Allah. There is unanimity in the Brotherhood that common people do not have the right to enforce legal punishments on the criminals. As far as the free criminals are concerned, there is absolute unanimity that none other than the Imam can enforce the legal punishment on them. Hence, when the responsibility of enforcing the legal punishments is an absolute and essential responsibility, and this responsibility cannot be discharged without an Imam, and when it is also a fact that that thing itself becomes mandatory on which performance of a mandate is dependent, if it is not out of reach, then the appointment of an Imam becomes absolutely mandatory."²

¹ The Quran, 5:38.

² Tafseer-e-Kabeer, Vol. 3, p. 415.

As far as the Sayings of the Prophet are concerned, many Sayings have been quoted in the first Chapter which throw light on the necessity of a system of government for the Muslim Society. Out of these, the following two Sayings are given below:

"Any person who died and he did not have the noose of allegiance (of the leader of the Muslims) in his neck, died the death of Ignorance."¹

"I command you with five things: (1) collective life; (2) listening (to the commands of the leader); (3) obeying (the commands); (4) migration; and (5) Jihad in the Cause of Allah."²

The style of the first Saying with regard to the necessity of a system of government is quite similar to the style of the Quran as referred to above. When the Saying of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) says that deprivation of oath of allegiance to the caliphate lands man into the life of Ignorance, it clearly means that a Muslim society cannot be without the system of caliphate. When this is the reality, then it is being pronounced clearly that establishment of such a system and keep it established is the natural and essential responsibility of the Muslim society, because in the material world no system of government establishes by itself, but is established with the efforts of human groups. Hence, without having the sense of responsibility and without striving to establish it, the Muslim society too cannot have a suitable system of government.

As far as the second Saying is concerned, it gives clear and direct instructions in this regard, because it clearly ordains to lead such a collective life which is not an ordinary one, but based on "listening" and "obeying." That is, such a collective life where ordinances get implemented, where there is someone to issue ordinances and where the people willingly obey such ordinances. In clear words, it should be a

¹ Muslim, Vol. 2, p. 128.

² Ahmed, Tirmizi, as referred to in Mishkat, p. 321.

collective life under a "system of listen and obey" or a "government organization," because the existence of "listen and obey" depends on the existence of a government. Where there is no government, the question of "listen and obey" does not arise at all. Hence, these two words have been abundantly used in the Sayings of the Prophet and almost everywhere they have been used in the sense of obeying the leaders and rulers.

As regards the model of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), it is quite evident in this regard. Although figuratively he was a ruler from the very beginning of his Prophethood, this fact manifested more clearly after his migration to Madinah and he remained the de facto ruler till his last breath. All the Believers were one nation and brotherhood and he was its head. The entire Islamic territory was a State and he was the ruler of that State. Hence, the definition of the State and the government can be fully applied to the Muslim society and the personality of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). It means that every moment of the Prophet's life in Madinah bears witness that the perception of a State and the Government is connected with the perception of Islam, Muslim society and the agency of the Prophethood, theoretically always, and practically to the possible extent. Otherwise, it should be agreed that the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) performed a task and kept on performing which was not related to the Religion of Allah, and assumed such a position which was not required under the requirements of the Prophethood. However, it is quite evident that others might agree with it but it is impossible for those who believe him to be the Prophet of Allah to agree with it.

As regards the model of the Companions of the Prophet, the details are as follows:

When the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) expired, the foremost thing that the Companions of the Prophet thought important and gave preference to it over all other things was the election of the vicegerent (Caliph) of the Prophet and establishment of the system of caliphate. They even postponed the burial of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). He was

buried only after the election of the Caliph. This policy of the Companions was neither contradictory nor provisional, but was unanimous and permanent. That is, they did it with unanimity, and thereafter always followed it. Whenever a Caliph died, he was not buried till his successor was not got elected first.¹

This unanimous and permanent policy of the Companions manifests their strong sense of the importance and necessity of the system of government which perhaps does not have any similitude. This was their resolute unanimity that the Muslim society cannot remain devoid of an Imam and Caliph; in other words it should be without a system of government. It is an unacceptable situation from the Islamic point of view.

After the expiry of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), Hazrat Abu Bakr, addressing the Companions had said:

"Beware! Muhammad (pbuh) has expired, and now this Religion requires a person who is responsible for its establishment."²

The intention of Hazrat Abu Bakr from the above statement was clearly nothing but election and installation of a Caliph. This was stated in the full gathering of the Companions and none had opposed it.

Hazrat Umar Faruq has stated:

"There is no Islam without al-Jamat, and there is no al-Jamat without the authority."³

When the *Khwarij* raised the slogan of "*there is no authority except with Allah*," against Hazrat Ali, he said:

¹ Sharah 'Aqayed Nasfia, p. 110.

² Kitab al-Muwaqif wa Sharah, Vol. 8, p. 346.

³ Jame' Bayan al-'Ilm.

*"They say there should not be any authority (and government) although authority is essential be it good or bad."*¹

The above are the statements of the exemplary successors of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). Ponder over them and see whether there is any word which can be used to explain the necessity of a system of government for the Muslim Brotherhood and which has not been used.

When proofs from the Holy Quran, the Sayings of the Prophet, the policy of the Prophet and the statements and policy of his Companions are available in such a clear manner about the necessity of a system of government, the Islamic scholars could have said nothing but that it is an inevitable necessity of a Muslim society and that establishing it and keep it established is one of the religious duties. Hence, Qazi Mawardi writes:

*"Establishment of the caliphate for that person who is capable of discharging its responsibilities is unanimously agreed to be mandatory."*²

Likewise, 'Allama Taftazani writes in Sharah Aqaayid Nasafiyah:

*"There is unanimity that appointment of an Imam (Caliph) is mandatory."*³ (p. 110)

¹ Al-Milal wa al-Nihal, by al-Shahrastani, Vol. 1, p. 55.

² Al-Ahkaam al-Sultaniyah, Vol. 3.

³ Except for the insignificant group of Kharijites, the entire Muslim Brotherhood is unanimous on this issue. However, the Imamites and the Ismailies are of the opinion that though the appointment of Imam is mandatory, it is not the responsibility of the people to do so, but is the responsibility of Allah. According to the Kharijites, appointment of Imam and establishment of the system of government is permissible and not mandatory. (Kitaab al-Muwafiq wa Sharah, Vol. 8, p. 345). But these two opinions are practically, intellectually and religiously so worthless that there is no need to contradict them.

That is, it is mandatory on the Muslim Brotherhood to establish its own system of government. If it does not fulfil this mandate, it would be a collective sin for which it will be answerable before Allah. Presenting arguments in this behalf, he writes:

"Because discharging many religious duties depend on it (i.e. on the Imamat)." (Ibid)

Actually, it was the discharge of the religious duties for which the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and his Companions strived for as has been described above. In other words, when majority of the religious duties cannot be performed without the system of government, it means that it is impossible to establish Islam in its entirety. Hence, it has to be agreed that without the system of government, Islam cannot manifest itself fully, and common sense is forced to agree that the position of that Islam which does not possess its own system of government will be that of a disabled and paralysed human body. Such a body, though cannot be construed a dead body, cannot also be said to be a healthy and useful body, and it will never be able to perform those tasks which a healthy and able-bodied person can perform.

This relationship between Islam and the system of government is not confined to the "Islam" which is presented by the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), but encompasses every "Islam" that was brought by every Prophet of Allah before Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Hence, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) says about the previous Brotherhood (of Children of Israel) that:

"The Children of Israel were governed by the Prophets of Allah. When a Prophet died, another Prophet used to succeed him."¹

Whatever might have been the forms of this "governance," it is to be agreed that it was actually a system of

¹ Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

government. However, the complete and standardised version of this system was that which had been found in the eras of Hazrat David (Dawud) and Hazrat Solomon (Sulaiman) (peace be upon them). From this Saying, it is also understood that not only the system of government was in existence in the Children of Israel and was directly governed by the Prophets of Allah, but it was one of the objectives of the Prophets. This point fully manifests the importance of politics for Religion and the system of government for the Believers.

DUTIES OF THE CALIPHATE

The duties and work of the person appointed to the post of caliphate will be quite wider and different than the other common rulers. This post, from the beginning to the end, is a religious post, and Islam establishes it for the achievement of its determined objective. Therefore, it is the foremost duty of the Caliph to achieve this objective. This objective is nothing but "establishment of the Religion of Allah," as is clear from the Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). For example, he says:

"If a mutilated slave is to be made your leader and he leads you according to the Book of Allah, listen to him and obey him."¹

On another occasion, he said:

"This thing (i.e. the caliphate) will be in Quraish. Any person who fights against them, Allah will throw him down, until they establish the Religion."²

According to the aforesaid Sayings, it is quite evident that the ruler retains the right to be obeyed and a caliph the right to the powers of the caliphate as long as he discharges his duties according to the Islamic Law and keep established the Religion of Islam. It is a proven fact that it is for a particular

¹ Muslim, Kitab al-Amara.

² Bukhari, Kitab al-Ahkaam.

purpose and duty that a particular post is created. Therefore, the meaning of the Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) is that the objective of the establishment of the post of caliphate and the duty of the Caliph is nothing but establishment of Islam. Further, the statement of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique that: "*Muhammad (pbuh) has expired, and now this Religion requires a person who is responsible for its establishment*" is a clear pronouncement that the existence of the Caliph is required only for the establishment of the Religion of Allah, and this is the duty that the Caliph has to discharge. In view of these facts, the Islamic scholars have rightly defined "Imamat" (i.e. Caliphate) as follows:

"Caliphate means to be the successor of the Prophet (of Allah) in the matter of establishment of the Religion (of Islam)."¹

The meaning of the establishment of Religion is as wide as the meaning of Religion itself. All the ordinances of the Quran and the Sunnah are part of the Religion of Islam. Therefore, the meaning of the establishment of Religion is that the Muslim society should be made to lead its life according to the entire ordinances of the Quran and the Sunnah. Details of this brief statement cannot be given here nor is it necessary to do so. However, a few fundamental points should be understood in order to know a brief outline of the duties of a Caliph. Keeping in view those reasons and objectives for which Islam has made establishment of this post essential, the following duties of the Caliph can be determined:

1. Intellectual and ideological protection of Islam; propagation of the Islamic knowledge; making arrangements to retain the religious beliefs and their constant development.
2. Establishment of the practical foundations of Islam (i.e. Salat, Zakat, Fasting and Hajj) and not allowing the Muslim society to be lethargic about them.

¹ Kitab al-Muwaqif.

3. Defend Islam and the Brotherhood against the assaults of their enemies and discharge the duties of Jihad and war in this regard.
4. Establishment of a justice system.
5. Implementation of punishments on the criminals.
6. Protection of the life and property of the members of the society and establishment of peace and tranquillity.
7. Taking care of the poor and the needy.
8. Establishment of the agency of enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong both within the Muslim society and outside the society.

Many more points can be included in this list. Hence, some of the Islamic scholars have included some more duties of the Caliph. However, whatever is included other than the above will either be one of them or it might not be of fundamental nature.

RIGHTS OF THE CALIPHATE

The rights of the Caliphate or the Caliph of the Muslims are as wide as his duties. No other ruler of the world or the government have been conferred such rights. The details of the rights are as follows:

1) Obedience: The foremost right of a Caliph is that his orders are to be listened to and obeyed. Almighty Allah ordains in the Holy Quran:

"O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you." (4:59)

In this Verse, obedience of the persons charged with authority, under which the Caliph comes on the top, has been ordained, and has been made essential for the Believers. Its importance can be gauged from the fact that it has been mentioned soon after the obedience of Allah and His Prophet. Explaining this demand, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said:

"One who obeyed me, in fact obeyed Allah and one who disobeyed me, in fact disobeyed Allah. One who obeyed the man in authority, in fact obeyed me, and one who disobeyed the man in authority, in fact disobeyed me."¹

The obedience which, in reality, becomes the obedience of Allah and His Prophet cannot be left to the choice and convenience of the individuals. It is its right to keep it beyond the natural dispositions of the individuals; it has been done so. Hence, it is reported by Hazrat 'Ubada bin Samit that:

"We were called by the Messenger of Allah and he took oath of allegiance from us. The oath of allegiance included among other things the oath that we will listen and obey (our leaders) in the state of cheerfulness and in detestation, in straitened circumstance and in easy circumstances."²

Moreover, it is not only mandatory on the Muslims to obey their leader in the state of detestation and straitened circumstances, but it remains mandatory even if their leaders are wicked and give preference to their own self over the rights of others. Hence, the following words are added to the aforesaid Saying:

"(We will obey them) even if they prefer (themselves) over us."

These instructions do not end here. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has further instructed:

"You should listen and obey (the leaders) even if your back is lashed and your property is usurped; listen and obey."³

¹ Muslim, Vol. 2.

² Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

³ *Ibid.*

Many other similar Sayings of the Prophet advise the Muslims that they should keep on suffering the oppressions of the tyrannical rulers but should not give up the principle of "listen and obey." As long as a person holds the post of Imam or Caliph, his right to be obeyed cannot be denied, and his wickedness, injustices, and oppression cannot annul this right. The importance of this right and what will be the consequences of the denial of this right for a Muslim can be gauged from the following Sayings of the Prophet:

"Whoever withdraws his hand from the obedience will meet Allah on the Day of Judgement in such a state that he will not have any argument for it."¹

It is understood from this Saying that the issue of disobedience does not end in this world, but will also be placed before Allah on the Day of Judgement and it will be impossible for man to say anything in defence of this crime, and he will have to admit the crime. On another occasion, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said:

"Whoever sees a detestable thing from his Amir, he should bear it patiently (and should not think of disobeying him), because any who separates himself from the al-Jamat even by a span of hand will die the death of Ignorance."²

While this Saying throws light on the fact which was understood from the previous Saying in another manner, it also tells us why it happens. This Saying says that the status of the Caliph of the Muslims is like a symbol of Islamic Collectivism and the organization of the Brotherhood. Therefore, denial of obedience is not the denial of the obedience of one person, but, in reality, is the pronouncement of separation from the entire collective organization. This is such a dangerous step that after this even the claim of being a Muslim carries no weight. In spite of all his godliness, when a

¹ *Ibid.*

² Bukhari, Kitab al-Fitan.

person dies, he dies the death of Ignorance. Hence, we have already read the warning in this regard that:

"Whoever got separated from the al-Jamat even by a span of hand, removed the noose of Islam from his neck, unless he returns back (to the al-Jamat)."¹

2) Love: It is the right of the Caliphate that the person in authority should be loved. As he is obeyed outwardly, he should also be loved immensely. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) says:

"Your best Caliphs are those whom you love and who love you, for whom you pray and who pray for you. The worst Caliphs are those whom you hate and who hate you, and you curse them and they curse you."²

That is, the best Caliph should be as has been described in the above Saying. His real position is that people should have good emotions for him, they should be his well-wishers, and love him immensely. Hence, in another Saying, this attitude has been regarded as the requirement of the Religion of Islam. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said:

"Religion means loyalty and sincerity." We (the Companions) asked: "For whom?" He said: "For Allah, for His Prophet, for the Caliphs of the Muslims, and for common Muslims."³

This is the reason that the oath of allegiance given to the Caliphate is not just a ritualistic manifestation of loyalty, but has been regarded as giving the "fruit of one's heart."

¹ Mishkat.

² Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

³ Muslim.

"Whoever made an oath of allegiance to a Caliph, he gave his hand in his hand and handed over the fruit of his heart; hence, he should obey him as far as possible."¹

It means that the oath of allegiance to the Caliph of the Muslims is not just an oath of obedience, but is also an oath of love and sincerity.

3) Oath of Allegiance for Islam and the Hereafter:

The third right of the Caliphate is that the oath of allegiance should not be regarded as a worldly necessity but a requirement of Islam, and the objective behind the oath of allegiance made to the Caliph should be the Hereafter and seeking the good pleasure of Allah. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said:

"Allah will not talk to three persons on the Day of Judgement ... (One among them) is that person who made the oath of allegiance to the Caliph for the worldly objective."²

It is understood from the above that not only denial of oath of allegiance or obedience of the Caliph of the Muslims is undesirable and fatal, but superficial oath of allegiance and obedience will also be unacceptable which has been made for some worldly objective. It is true that generally the loyalties shown to the states are superficial and they suffice for them too. But the demands of Islam are quite different. The thing that the other states consider as their end requirement, that thing has no value in the sight of Islam. From the Islamic point of view only that obedience and oath of allegiance are considered valuable which are made as part of religious necessity and to seek the good pleasure of Allah.

The reasons for which the Caliphate and the Caliph of the Muslims have been given such extraordinary rights have been very clearly explained in the previous discussions.

¹ Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

² Bukhari, Vol. 2, Kitab al-Ahkaam.

Establishing the oath of allegiance as an essential requirement of Islam and the Hereafter is the right of the Caliphate, and this is also the fundamental nature of the Caliphate. Hence, we have seen in the light of clear arguments that the Caliphate is the most important religious necessity and that its establishment is mandatory under the Islamic Law. It is obvious that when a post or position is basically a religious post, it should be accepted and believed in as such. Otherwise, such acceptance will be a fraud. If a person does not accept the basic nature of a thing, his claim of its acceptance cannot be considered true.

As far as the love and obedience being the rights of the Caliphate are concerned, it can be understood very easily. The post that has been created and established for the sake of the Religion and its status being entirely religious, naturally a Muslim will view it with love and devotion and his practical attitude will be that of loyalty and obedience. This will be the requirement of his Faith and fulfilment of this requirement alone can satisfy his religious passion. Particularly, obedience will be the direct requirement of his Religion and Faith, because without it the existence of Caliphate becomes meaningless. There cannot be any kind of state or government where people are not prepared to obey. Refusal to obey will be the clear pronouncement of the end of a government. Because of this reason, stress has been laid on the obedience of the Caliphs and it has been ordained to discharge this duty as far as possible. This right to obedience cannot be challenged even when the people are being oppressed and tyrannised. This article has been incorporated in the Islamic Constitution because this is not concerned with just the obedience of the person of the Caliph of the Muslims, but concerns with the survival of the ordinances of Allah and His Prophet and Islam's collective system. Therefore, the Caliph might have defects in his person and might be a wrong doer, as long as he occupies the post of the Caliphate, the rule of law, the practical implementation of the collective system, the performance of a greater part of the Religion depends on him and without him the collective life of the Muslims cannot remain Islamic. In other words, the Caliph is the practical manifestation of the

sovereignty and power of Allah on earth. No doubt, a Muslim can bear anything, but cannot bear to see this "manifestation" and "sign" disappearing from sight. He will tolerate lack of peace in the "house of Islam" but will never tolerate to see its demolition and he getting deprived of the Islamic collective system. If any person is prepared to tolerate this, then it means that his Faith is in the throes of death, because he is giving precedence to the interests of the world over the survival of the Islamic collective system, and this is such a thing that cannot coexist with Faith and Islam.

LIMITS OF OBEDIENCE

The expediency for which such an emphasis has been made on the obedience of the persons charged with authority also demands that though this obedience should be extraordinarily essential but after a certain limit it should become necessary to deny it, as a Muslim tolerates all the difficulties while obeying his Amir only because he does not want to disturb that system on which his remaining a "Muslim" in the collective life depends. However, obedience should be denied if demand is made to obey in that matter which actually nullifies the very objective of the Islamic collective system. Hence, as forcefully and clearly the Islamic Law has ordained obedience of the authority, with similar force and emphasis it has also declared that this obedience is not unconditional; it is conditional and it should be within a certain limit. It has fixed this limit, on the negative side, with the word "*Ma'siat*" ("disobedience"), and on the positive side, with the word "*Ma'roof*" ("the good"). Hence, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said:

"There is no obedience in the disobedience of Allah; indeed, obedience is only in the good."¹

That is, the condition for obedience is that the order issued should be for the performance of "the good" and not

¹ Muslim.

which involves disobedience of Allah. Such an order should be spurned. Refusal to perform it would be as essential as performing the good. Hence, Imam Nawawi writes:

"There is unanimity of the Islamic scholars that the obedience of the persons in authority in such deeds which do not fall under disobedience (of Allah) is mandatory, and it is unlawful in those deeds which fall under disobedience (of Allah)."¹

The following incident throws light as to the prohibition and unlawful nature of obeying the person in authority in deeds which fall under disobedience of Allah:

"The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) once sent a division of the army under the command of an Ansaar (Helper) for Jihad, and as usual instructed the soldiers that they should obey their commander. During the course of the journey, the commander got angry for some reason, and in the fit of rage, ordered the soldiers to gather firewood. When the firewood had been gathered, he ordered: "Ignite the firewood." When the firewood was ignited, addressing the soldiers, he said: "Has not the Prophet of Allah instructed you to listen to me and obey me?" The soldiers said: "Yes, he has." Then he said: "Well, jump into the fire." Listening to this, the soldiers began staring at each other and some were even ready to obey. But some others said: "We have come to the Prophet of Allah in order to save ourselves from the fire (how can we jump into the fire by ourselves?)." Anyhow, the discussion and uncertainty continued for some time. In the meanwhile, the anger of the commander subsided and the fire too got extinguished. When the troops returned back after their campaign, they narrated the incident to the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). After hearing the incident, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) addressing those who were ready to jump into the fire said: "If you

¹ Sharah Muslim, Vol. 2, Kitab al-Amaara.

had jumped into the fire, you would have remained in it till the Day of Judgement.”¹

It becomes clear from this incident and the Saying of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) that disobedience of Allah remains unlawful even when it has been committed at the bidding of the person in authority, and the philosophy of “obedience of authority” can never make it pardonable.

The limits of the obedience in “*Ma’roof*” (the good) which are essential are explained and set by the word “*Ma’siat*” (disobedience of Allah), which has been used to describe the negative aspect of the issue of obedience in the aforesaid Saying and in many other Sayings. When it is declared that “there is no obedience in the disobedience of Allah, and that obedience is only in the good,” it clearly means that all those ordinances, performance of which does not lead to the disobedience of Allah, will all fall under the good, and their performance will be obligatory. In other words, all those issues which come under issues of administration and in which there could be many opinions in view of their different aspects fall under the good. That is, if a person disagrees with the orders of the person in authority in such administrative matters, he should obey them even when he thinks his opinion to be intellectually more matured and the opinion of the person in authority to be immature. This is his obligatory duty, because every such order comes under “the good” and obeying the orders of the person in authority in this regard is mandatory for a Muslim. It is quite possible that the person’s opinion, which he firmly believes to be right, might be based on sound grounds and could be right, but in spite of this, he is not entitled to refuse to obey the person in authority accusing him of immaturity. Neither his inclination and intuition, nor his far-sightedness, nor his belief in his veracity and nothing in the world can give him the right to refuse. He can get the right to refuse only when the order is against “the good.” In such a situation, it is not only his right to refuse to obey, but it becomes obligatory on him to do so.

¹ Muslim, Vol. 2, Kitab al-Amaara.

DISMISSAL OF THE CALIPHS

After going through all the aforesaid Islamic instructions about the obedience of the Caliphs and the persons in authority, a question naturally arises whether the demands of possible evil characteristics and oppressions of the persons in authority are just those which have been described above or there are some more? Is the instruction of the Islamic Law is limited to instructing the people to bear with constancy if the persons in authority oppress and tyrannise them, and just not obey them if they order them to commit deeds which lead to the disobedience of Allah and in all other matters do not refuse to disobey them, or it has given further instructions beyond this? In other words, whether the right to the caliphate and authority ends or not when their evil and oppressions go beyond a certain limit, and whether there is such a deterioration of ideology and practice setting of which becomes a cause for the dismissal of a person from the position of caliphate?

The Islamic Law has positively responded to this question, and to understand it, we have to go into its details. That is, firstly it should be examined in principle what kinds of deterioration that can develop in the ideology and practice of the Caliphs. Only after such an examination, those forms can be clearly established because of which a person loses his right to the Caliphate. If you examine this issue deeply, you will find that the deterioration in ideology and practice can be of the following six kinds:

1. The person in authority does not fulfil the rights of his subjects and oppresses and tyrannises them.
2. He begins to order people to perform those deeds which lead to the disobedience of Allah.
3. He becomes an evil-monger and openly acts against the Islamic Law and ordinances and begins to commit sins and iniquity.
4. He gives up the most important practical and fundamental signs of Islam, i.e. the fundamental pillars of Islam.

5. He distances himself from Islam to such an extent as to change the constitution and laws of the state and incorporates in them un-Islamic aspects in them.
6. He gives up the fundamental Islamic belief and adopts the unbelief.

As far as the first two kinds of deterioration are concerned, the instruction of the Islamic Law has been explained above. That is, in spite of these defects, the authority of the concerned person will not be challenged, and his obedience in "the good" remains obligatory.

It is the same with the third kind of deterioration. That is, a Muslim will strongly abhor the sins and iniquities of the persons in the authority, but will not refuse to acknowledge their authority, and nor will it be lawful for him to pull out from their obedience. Hence, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has said:

"Beware, if you see the ruler appointed over you committing any acts in disobedience of Allah, you should abhor those acts committed in disobedience of Allah, but should not pull out from his obedience."¹

Hence, there is unanimity of the Islamic scholars that a Caliph cannot be dismissed for committing sins and iniquities, and it is not correct to rebel against him because of his sins; rather, it is unlawful to do so.²

As regards what should be the reaction of the Muslims if the persons in authority get involved in the fourth kind of deterioration; whether they should continue to acknowledge their authority and regard obedience in "the good" essential, or adopt some other attitude, the following Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) answer these questions:

"Such persons of authority will be appointed over you, in whom you will find some things good and some things

¹ Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

² Sharah Muslim, al-Nawawi, Kitab al-Amaara.

bad." ... (The Companions) asked: "Shall we not wage war against them, O Prophet of Allah?" He said: "No, as long as they offer Salat (and do not abandon it)."¹

...Worst of your Caliphs will be those whom you hate and who hate you." It was asked: "Shall we not expel them with sword?" He said: "No, as long as they establish (the institution of) Salat amongst you."²

From the aforesaid Sayings, it becomes clear that as far as the Salat is concerned (which is the foremost and most important pillar of Islam), that person cannot remain the ruler or Caliph of the Muslims who has abandoned the Salat. It will become the responsibility of the Muslims to either dismiss him or expel him by force if he refuses to give up his post voluntarily. Hence, Qazi 'Ayaz writes:

"There is unanimity of the Islamic Scholars that no Unbeliever can be made the Caliph, and after getting elected as a Caliph, if the concerned person adopts Unbelief, he should be immediately dismissed; and such will be the case when he gives up to establish the Salat and prompt others towards it."³

As far as the other pillars of Islam are concerned, we do not find any such instructions in the Quran and the Sunnah as are available with regard to the Salat. However, we find a few fundamental instructions in this regard, which guide us in this regard. For example:

"It is narrated by Hazrat 'Ubada bin Samit that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) called us and he took the oath of allegiance from us. In this oath of allegiance, he (the Prophet), among other things, took the oath from us that we will listen (to the persons in authority) and obey (them). ...that we will not struggle or fight against

¹ Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

² Ibid.

³ Sharah Muslim, al-Nawawi, Vol. 2.

the person in authority unless we see him committing open Unbelief for which we have clear evidence from Allah.”¹

In the above Saying, permission has been given to take steps against the person in authority only when he has adopted unbelief. It means that as soon as he is seen committing open unbelief, his right to Caliphate ends. Another thing worth pondering here is about the kind of unbelief meant here; whether it means unbelief only of the beliefs or it includes unbelief in practice too. While pondering over the purport of this Saying if we keep in view the two Sayings that have been quoted about the abandonment of Salat, the second thing seems likely to be correct, because in all the three Sayings only one issue has been described, and that is, under which situation the right to the Caliphate is taken away. This “situation” has been described in the aforesaid two Sayings as the situation of “abandonment of the Salat,” while in this Saying it has been described as “open unbelief.” It is quite obvious that when two different kinds of words are used to describe and determine one situation, they will be different only in their appearance but will not be different in their meaning, and if there happens to be any difference in the meaning it would be only in its brevity and details, not fundamentally. Therefore, it should be agreed that the meaning of the words “open unbelief” in the last Saying should be not only unbelief of the beliefs but also unbelief in practice, because for describing the same situation using, in one place, the words “abandonment of the Salat” and in another place the words of “open unbelief” shows that “abandonment of the Salat” is also a form of “open unbelief.” Moreover, since offering Salat is an act and not a belief, not establishing the Salat is abandoning of an “act” and not abandoning of a “belief.” In such a situation, declaring abandoning of Salat as “open unbelief” is the clear proof that here unbelief means practical unbelief too. Perhaps, this is the reason that for describing “open unbelief,” instead of words like “unless you hear” or “unless you know,” words “unless you see” have been

¹ Bukhari, Vol. 2, Kitab al-Fitan.

used, so that the existence of practical unbelief could be fully manifested.

When it has been made clear that "unbelief" in this Saying means practical unbelief too, it is to be pondered whether Salat is the only act abandoning of which can be declared as practical unbelief or the nature of other pillars of Islam is also similar. This issue can have two opinions: positive as well as negative. Positive, because the Quran and the Sunnah consider abandoning these acts as practical unbelief. Negative, because the clear manner in which Salat has been made the line of demarcation between Islam and unbelief and abandoning which has been declared as practical unbelief, such clear indication is not available in the Quran and Sunnah about any other pillar of Islam.

Now take into consideration the fifth kind of deterioration. The following Verse of the Quran fundamentally decides about the Caliph who does not protect the Islamic characteristics of the State and who incorporates un-Islamic things in its constitution and laws:

"If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah has revealed, they are the Unbelievers." (5:44)

This Verse of the Quran makes it clear that judging in the light of non-Islamic laws abandoning the Islam ie. Law is the "practical unbelief." Hence, when judging in the light of non-Islamic laws is practical unbelief, then changing the laws or the constitution of the Islamic State with non-Islamic principles and laws would be the severest kind of practical unbelief. As described above, the effects of practical unbelief is that the Caliph loses his right to the Caliphate. Hence, there can be no other decision of the Islamic Law than that such a person in authority who has corrupted himself in this manner should be dismissed summarily from his post. Qazi 'Ayaz writes in this regard:

"Hence, if the Caliph adopts unbelief, or changes the Islamic Law, or adopts heresy (innovation), he is not

entitled to rule and the mandate of his obedience on the Muslims gets abrogated, and it becomes obligatory on them to rise against him, dismiss him and appoint any other just leader, if it is possible for them.”¹

Imam Nawawi, after quoting the aforesaid statement of Qazi `Ayaz, explains the meaning of “*No, as long as they offer Salat*” and ““*No, as long as they establish (the institution of) Salat amongst you*” as follows:

“The same fact has been mentioned in this too which has been mentioned above. That is, as long as the Caliphs do not dare to change the fundamental and absolute laws of Islam, it is not lawful to rebel against them just because of their oppression and iniquity.”²

It is quite obvious from the aforesaid explanations that if a Caliph changes the Islamic Laws with non-Islamic laws, he should also be changed.

As far as the sixth deterioration is concerned, no further discussion about it is required. When the “practical unbelief” renders the dismissal of the Caliph necessary, then there should not be any doubt about unbelief in the Islamic beliefs rendering him eligible for dismissal. Islam and the Faith are the foremost, essential and unanimous conditions on which the right to Caliphate is based. If a person does not fulfil these conditions, the question of a person becoming a Caliph or remaining a Caliph does not arise at all. Hence, the Islamic scholars are unanimous that the Muslims cannot bear to see any person occupying the post of Caliphate who has related himself with the unbelief. Hafiz Ibn Hajar writes:

“There is unanimity that the Caliph gets dismissed when he adopts unbelief. Hence, it is obligatory on every Muslim (in such a situation) to rise up for this work. Those who take up this task will be rewarded, and those

¹ Sharah Muslim, al-Nawawi, Kitab al-Amaara.

² Ibid.

who adopt sycophancy will be regarded as sinners, and for those who are unable to do so (in spite of their intention and efforts) it is obligatory for them to migrate from that part of the earth.”¹

It is understood from the above details that out of the possible six kinds of deterioration in beliefs and practice, it is forbidden under the Islamic Law to challenge the right to Caliphate in the first three kinds,² and in the last three kinds, it is instructed that the Caliph should be dismissed.

The dismissal of the Caliph in the event of the last three kinds of deterioration needs no further arguments and proof. As has been explained above, the system of government in itself is not required for Islam and the Muslims; rather, it is

¹ Fatah al-Baari, Vol. 13, p. 101.

² The meaning of this forbiddance is not that every oppressive act, every sin, committed by the Caliphs and other persons in authority, and every ordinance issued by them against the commands of Allah should be borne silently; rather, the fact is quite different. If the Islamic Law (Shariat) has instructed to tolerate the lesser evil of oppression and tyranny in order to avoid the greater evil of bloodshed, it has also strongly instructed that whenever any evil act is seen being committed by those in authority, every peaceful effort should be made to reform them by presenting before them the Truth. The Saying of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) narrated by Hazrat 'Ubada bin Samit has been quoted above which says: “*It is narrated by Hazrat 'Ubada bin Samit that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) called us and he took the oath of allegiance from us. In this oath of allegiance, he (the Prophet), among other things, took the oath from us that we will listen (to the persons in authority) and obey (them). ...that we will not struggle or fight against the person in authority unless we see him committing open Unbelief for which we have clear evidence from Allah.*” The remaining words of this Saying are: “*And (he took the oath of allegiance) that we will tell the truth wherever we are and will not be afraid, in the cause of Allah, of the reproaches of the reproachers.*” The style of the wordings clearly shows that the attitude of the Muslims with regard to evil rulers should not end with not taking any steps against their authority and that they should obey them in the good and bear their oppression and wickedness with constancy, but it goes even further; they should not only censure them on their wickedness but also warn them about the consequences they have to face in the Hereafter. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has repeatedly advised the Muslims that as forbidding the common people from committing wrong is their duty, similarly it is obligatory on them to censure the rulers and those in authority on their wrong deeds and un-Islamic behaviour, and if they cannot do so openly they should at least feel detestation against them in their hearts.

the only source of achieving some exigencies and a great objective, and out of these exigencies and objective, the foremost and fundamental importance is given to the implementation of Islamic Law. If the head of the Islamic State is to apostatise from Islam, though he is expected to administer the State, it cannot be expected that he will utilise his political, ideological and practical powers to achieve that objective which Islam regards as the fundamental objective of establishing its own system of government. On the contrary, it can be said with all certainty that he will utilise all his powers against it. There is no doubt that taking away the powers of Caliphate from him will be the objective of Islam. Similar situation can also arise in respect of the remaining two kinds of deterioration. The person who has become so indifferent to Islam that he does not relate to its most important practical fundamentals and does not have any qualms to annul the Islamic laws, cannot be expected that he will remain sincerely loyal to the real objective of the Caliphate. It might be possible that he might make the State economically stronger and become a leader of the world, but he will never be expected to make it the centre of piety and righteousness, and under his leadership train the common citizens of the State to establish the Salat, pay the Zakat, and take up the work of enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong. In view of these facts, allowing such a person to remain the head of the Islamic collective system will be similar to giving responsibilities of maintaining law and order to the thieves and dacoits.

EFFECTS OF CIVILISATIONAL PROGRESS ON THE ISSUE OF DISMISSAL

How and when to dismiss the head of a State, is clearly an issue of political system. The nature of the political system is such that the prevalent civilizational conditions influence the determination of its rules and regulations. Therefore, they do not remain constant. As long as the civilization of a country remains in its infancy, its system of government and politics remain brief and simple and the rules and regulations of this system will be limited. Thereafter, as the civilization

progresses, the rules and regulations of the politics also get changed as happens in other segments of the society, and the system of the State gets more principled, more advanced, more extended and more regulated.

Islam is a universal religion and an eternal system of life. Therefore, motion and growth are in its nature. It not only wants to go along with the civilizational growth, but wants to guide and supervise it, because it is included in its duties. This nature and capability of Islam requires that it keeps in view the changing circumstances of the era and the requirements of ever expanding civilization, and give new shape and colour to those rules and regulations of its political system which are not fundamental. Therefore, if such political regulations are got moulded into the conveniences provided by the prevalent era, it would not be an "innovation" and against the tenets of Islam.

The issue of dismissal of the Caliphs also falls under this category, because the issue of how long a person should be retained as a Caliph and when and how he should be removed from his post, is included in those regulations which are determined by civilizational situation and the demands of the time and are not in the nature of unalterable fundamentals of the religious system. Therefore, when the civilizational and collective situation of the world has changed considerably compared to what it was fourteen hundred years ago, and it has become easy to change the governments, a question has arisen whether the dismissal of the Caliphs will remain confined to the aforesaid three kinds of deterioration, or it can be affected in case of the any one of the other three remaining kinds of deterioration. The answer to this question depends on the answer to another question: Is the protection of the life and property of the people and safeguarding their rights not included in the objectives of the Islamic State, and whether the character, conduct and the Beliefs of the Caliph affect the mental training of the people and the achievement of the objectives of the State or not? The answer to this question will, in fact, be in the affirmative. This also answers the first question. That is, taking advantage of the peaceful methods of

changing the governments which are now available in the world, a head of the Islamic State can be removed, rather should be removed, when he is seen oppressing the people, or seen committing sins and iniquities, or seen ordering performance of deeds in disobedience of Allah, because after getting involved in such iniquities, it is foolishness to expect that he will protect the life and property of the people and safeguard their rights, that the people themselves will not go astray following his example, that the respect and honour of the Islamic State will not get tarnished, and that its objectives will get fulfilled. In such circumstances, it will not be wise to let him continue with the responsibilities of the Caliphate in spite of having the power to dismiss him and protect Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood from his evil. It cannot be expected that the Islamic Law will stop its followers from changing the Caliph even when harm after harm is being caused to the objectives of the system of the Caliphate, and even when they have a clear way to do so.

The wordings of the Sayings quoted above in this regard should not cause any confusion or misunderstanding, where it is clearly instructed that unless the Caliph does not abandon the Salat or commits "open unbelief," action against him is prohibited. No doubt, this is the instruction that we find in these Sayings. However, ignoring the exigency on the basis of which this instruction has been given, the real objective of these Sayings and the viewpoint of Islamic Law about the oppressive and sinful persons in authority cannot be fully understood. Hence, it is necessary to understand this exigency first. The statement of Imam Nawawi in this behalf will be quite enough:

"The Ahle Sunnat are unanimous that the ruler cannot be dismissed because of his iniquity. ...The Islamic scholars say that the reason for imposing ban on dismissal and making unlawful to rebel against him is that strife, bloodshed and conflict which rise as a result; the ruination that is caused as a result of his dismissal is

greater than the ruination that results in his continuance.”¹

The above opinion is with regard to those rulers who are iniquitous. Similar is the opinion of the Islamic scholars with regard to the oppressive and tyrannical rulers, and the fact is that whoever has understood Islam, cannot think of any other reason and wisdom about the prohibition. Therefore, there should not be any hesitation in accepting the fact that the kinds of deterioration in which it has been prohibited to take steps against the rulers and persons in authority is because of fear of chaos, civil war and bloodshed. Otherwise, this prohibition is not permanent and universal. In other words, for the Islamic Law, it was a matter of choosing one among the two inevitable calamities; either tolerate the oppression and iniquitous behaviour of the person in authority, or remove him by force and bear the resultant torments of civil war and bloodshed. The Islamic Law has declared the second calamity to be more severe than the first, and therefore, has instructed that he should be tolerated and by trying to remove him forcibly should not put the State into chaos and the common people into insufferable hardship of killings and destruction. However, as far as the “practical unbelief” or the “unbelief in the beliefs” is concerned, its nature was quite contrary to this view, because when these kinds of deterioration set in the rulers, they not only cause harm to the objectives of the Caliphate, but kill them altogether; there is no doubt that these objectives are more valuable than the blood of the Muslims. Therefore, in the sight of the Islamic Law, this calamity is more severe than the calamity of disorder and bloodshed. This is the reason that the Islamic Law lifts this ban of taking action against the persons in authority when these kinds of deterioration set in them.

Now, when this fact has been made clear that the ban on taking action against the tyrannical and iniquitous rulers is to avoid the calamity of civil war and bloodshed, it should also be agreed that where there is no fear of occurrence of this

¹ Sharah Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

calamity, this ban should be lifted. If the governments can be changed without any chaos and bloodshed, it would not be right to keep the tyrannical or iniquitous rulers on their posts. In such circumstances, the intellect and the Islamic Law demand that they should be removed from their posts. Hence, Hafiz Ibn Hajar writes:

Ibn al-Mateen has quoted the opinion of Dawudi that the edict of the Islamic scholars about the tyrannical rulers is that it is obligatory to dismiss them if they can be dismissed without any chaos and oppression; otherwise, it is mandatory to adopt patience.¹

Similarly, Imam Nawawi quotes the clarification of some other Islamic scholars:

"As far as the Saying (of the Prophet of Allah) "to be patient," it is concerned with those situations where it (i.e. any action against the ruler) results in chaos and bloodshed or similar kind of calamity."²

Anyhow, this is the opinion of the Islamic scholars about the tyrannical and iniquitous rulers. No doubt, this was the situation which prevailed fourteen hundred years ago, and even in the immediate past it was not easy to forcibly change the governments and it meant destroying the peace and order of the State. Therefore, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) had instructed to be patient in the matter of tyrannical and iniquitous rulers. However, now that this situation has changed, it should be agreed that there is no occasion to follow this instruction. It means that making use of the democratic system of electing the head of a government and, when required, dismissing him through votes, should be regarded as an Islamic system and a requirement of Islam. Wherever this kind of facility is available, it is obligatory on the Muslim intellectuals to make use of it. Whenever their ruler fails to discharge the responsibilities of the Caliphate correctly, he should be removed and another more righteous and capable

¹ Fatah al-Bari, Vol. 13, p. 6.

² Muslim, Kitab al-Emaan.

person should be appointed in his place, because there will not be any fear of chaos and bloodshed in changing the government by this method. In other words, the question of choosing a lesser calamity out of the two calamities does not arise at all.

Further, it is not necessary that the Caliph is removed by democratic means only when he does something wrong. Rather, whether he manifests any wrongdoing or not, opinion of the people should be gathered, after a reasonable period of time, as to the continuance of his Caliphate, because it is quite probable that, in the meantime, another more capable person might come into the picture whom people might trust and who is expected to discharge the duties of the Caliphate more diligently than the present incumbent. In such a situation, there is no reason not to change the government and make use of the capabilities of a more competent and proficient person just because the Caliphate of another person has already been established, because here importance is given to the Caliphate, its responsibilities and its objectives and not to a particular person or his right. In more clear words, in Islam government and Caliphate is just a responsibility and duty, and not a right. Therefore, when a person is removed from the post of Caliphate, his right is not taken away that he might complain about it; rather, a heavy responsibility is taken away from him and that too because the objectives of Islam and the Caliphate demanded it.

UNITY OF THE SYSTEM OF CALIPHATE

Since the necessity of the system of Caliphate, its importance and its kind are all fundamentally and completely religious, the Imam and the Caliph of the Muslims of an Islamic State, however wide might be its boundaries, will be only one and it will not be right to form different governments and caliphate in different regions. `Allama al-Mawardi writes:

*"It is not lawful for the Muslim Brotherhood to have two Caliphs at one time."*¹

Apart from a few individuals, the entire Brotherhood is unanimous about it. Imam Nawawi says:

*"The Islamic scholars are unanimous that whether the boundaries of Dar al-Islam (Islamic State) are wide or not, establishment of the Caliphate of two men in one era is unlawful."*²

The Islamic Law has given great importance to this principle. According to it, that person is liable to be executed who takes oath of allegiance as a Caliph when already another person has been established as a Caliph. There is a clear Saying of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) in this regard. He says:

*"If the oath of allegiance has been given to two Caliphs, kill the last of the two (if he himself does not end his Caliphate)."*³

Anyhow, "unity" is an established and very important principle of Islamic political system. Islam vehemently rejects existence of more than one collective system. If we ponder a little, we will come to know that it should have done so, because not only it is the demand of its nature, but also the demand of the objectives of its mission and system of Caliphate. As can be gathered from the details given in the previous pages, Islam has not instructed its followers to establish the system of Caliphate so that they can manifest themselves on the political horizon of the world, or their more ambitious persons can get the opportunity to satisfy their passion for political power, or their different national and racial groups can satisfy elevation of their national ego. On the contrary, it has given this instruction so that it could itself be the ruler, its laws are implemented on the human society, its

¹ Al-Ahkaam al-Sultaniya, p. 7.

² Sharah Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

³ Muslim, Kitab al-Amaara.

mission could reach every corner of the world, it and its followers can be protected from its enemies, and its boundaries of domination and power could keep on extending. In such a situation, if the entire Muslim Brotherhood instead of being one nation and one political unit gets divided into several political units and the entire Islamic State gets divided into different states and governments, it would be a sign of weakness of Islam and it would be negation of the unity of this Brotherhood. It means that apart from the "Rope of Allah," there are many other relationships which want to take up the role of becoming centres for the unity of its different groups, and that this Brotherhood has internally torn apart and cannot confront the unbelief as a single body. Obviously, this situation will extensively harm those objectives for which the system of Caliphate has been established. Therefore, Islam has not permitted that the Islamic world, instead of being one state can be a "Commonwealth" of many Islamic states. On the contrary, it has mandated that as a standard bearer of one mission, the Muslim Brotherhood should also be politically one Brotherhood and one nation.

As far as the issue concerning whether the system of government of the entire Brotherhood should be unitary or federal, the general temperament of Islam, the direction of its collective instructions, the interests of the objectives of the Caliphate and the traditions of the earliest Islamic era endorse the unitary system of the government. However, we cannot ignore the fact that this "endorsement" will apply only when all the Muslim regions are geographically contiguous to each other and their political authority is in the hands of the Muslims, or if not geographically contiguous there is no impediment to govern them under one system of government. It means that if this is not the situation, i.e. if all the Muslim regions are not geographically contiguous to each other and there are many non-Muslim states and governments in between which are a hindrance for forming unitary type of government of all the Islamic regions, or although all these regions are contiguous to each other but some of them are under the occupation of non-Muslims and thus have been

geographically cut off from the independent Muslim regions, in such a situation this "endorsement" cannot be insisted upon. This is not only the demand of the practical situation, but it is guided by some of the specific instructions in this behalf. When the tribe of Abdul Qais accepted Islam, its delegation came to the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and said: *"O Prophet of Allah, the Unbelievers of the tribe of Mudhir are in between our country and your country. Thus we cannot come to you whenever we want and seek your instructions; we get this opportunity only in the Prohibited months. Therefore, give us (necessary) instructions and ordinances, so that we can act upon them and propagate them to others when we return."* In response to the request of the delegation, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) gave them some instructions; one among them was:

"Keep paying the fifth of the war booty that you get."¹

Just ponder about the mental background of the aforesaid instruction. It must be that these people were given authorisation to wage war (Jihad) against the Unbelievers of the tribe of Mudhir according to their understanding of the situation and that it was not necessary for them to seek orders or approval from the centre in this regard, although in a unitary system of government the authorities of a region of the State can wage war only when they have received clear instructions from the centre in this regard. Therefore, the permission that was given by the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) to the tribe of Abdul Qais that they could take up military operations on their own shows that if the circumstances are not conducive, the system of government of an Islamic State can be federal instead of unitary, because the authority that the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) had given to the aforesaid tribe, that too in respect of war and peace, was not any less than the powers and authority that are made available to the provincial governments in a federal system.

¹ Muslim, Vol. 1, Kitab al-Emaan.

RELIGIOUS DEMANDS OF COLLECTIVE CHAOS

NECESSITY OF RESTORING THE COLLECTIVE SYSTEM

The extent to which and to what purpose an organized collective system is essential for the Muslim Brotherhood has been made clear in the previous discussion. However, no group in the world has been found to have remained in its desired state. Hence, this Brotherhood can also face such a situation when it would have lost its essential and desired collective system and would have become just a crowd of individuals instead of being an organized and disciplined group and practically losing its very purpose of existence; this is exactly the state of the Muslim Brotherhood today. It is quite obvious that this situation is undesirable in the sight of Islam. However, it is not quite clear what the Brotherhood should do in such a situation. Therefore, it is necessary to find out the ideological and practical answer to this important question.

First of all, let us find out the intellectual answer to this question.

We understand from all the previous discussion that collectivism – very solid, organized and disciplined collectivism – is naturally required by Islam and practically too it is inevitable. Without this the Muslim Brotherhood cannot survive as a Brotherhood nor will Islam be able to give to the humanity that for which it has been revealed. Its numerous ordinances, which relate to the most important aspects of human life, will just remain for writing and reading and there will not be any mode of implementing them in the practical world. All these things have been proved with clear arguments and proofs. Now just ponder; what is it that the intellect demand in view of all these things. It would be nothing but that this Brotherhood should once again become an organised group instead of a crowd; that kind of the organised group which has discipline and unity, which once

again can be called the "al-Jamat" and which is capable of fulfilling its objective of existence.

Now let us find out the religious answer to this question; this answer would, in fact, will be the real answer.

When we refer the Quran and the Sunnah for this purpose, we find the following instructions of the Quran in this regard:

"O you who believe!... And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves." (3:102-103)

"O you who believe! Enter into Islam whole-heartedly." (2:208)

The objective of the first Verse in respect of the issue under discussion is quite obvious. It directly instructs that all the Muslims should be united and organised and that it is essential that the "Rope of Allah" should bind them together. As far as the second Verse is concerned, it indirectly instructs about discharging this duty, because there will not be any possibility of the Brotherhood leading an unorganised life when every individual Muslim has totally submitted himself to the unconditional obedience of Allah and His Prophet. If all the Muslims submit themselves to Islam – that Islam which regards leading an organised collective life for the society essential and which issues detailed ordinances to listen and obey – it results in the Muslim society becoming a "solid cemented structure. Hence, indirectly the objective of the Verse is that if the Brotherhood is not united, then it should get united.

These instructions are general and all-pervasive. They are not meant for any particular situation, time, place or environment. Wherever there is a group of Muslims – small or large – these instructions are meant for it and it is incumbent upon them to act accordingly as far as possible. There is not even a slightest indication in these Verses that these instructions were meant only for the Companions of the

Prophet. Therefore, the Muslims of every era have to follow these instructions, whether they were the Muslims of the First Century A.H. when the entire Muslim Brotherhood was bound by the "Rope of Allah" or the Muslims of this Century when they are in chaos. Rather, the importance of these instructions and ordinances is more for the Muslims of this chaotic era than the Muslims of that organized era, because for them these instructions were precautionary while for the Muslims of this era it is more than mandatory. Abiding with the principles of hygiene for a sick person will be more essential than a healthy person.

After the Word of Allah, let us refer to the Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). Directly talking about the differences and chaotic conditions of the Brotherhood, he said:

"Those who will be alive after me will see lots of disagreements. In such a situation, it is incumbent upon you to hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and cling on to them with the teeth."¹

This is a comprehensive and principled instruction of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). It advises every Muslim that whenever disagreements and differences arise in the Brotherhood, you should hold fast to the Sunnah of the Prophet and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs; this would be the right religious attitude.

First we have to understand the meaning of the word "Sunnah" used in the aforesaid Saying. It should be clearly understood here that this word has not been used in the limited jurisprudential sense as is generally understood. The proof for this is found in the wordings of the Saying itself. The Saying instructs to hold fast not only to the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), but also the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs whenever disagreements arise in the

¹ Abu Dawood, Kitab al-Sunnah Vol. 2.

Brotherhood. It is quite obvious that under the jurisprudential terminology, only the sayings and actions of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) are considered the Sunnah and not the sayings, actions and the findings of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs or any other Companion of the Prophet. Therefore, the meaning of the word Sunnah in this Saying should be that which is found in a dictionary, which is habit and practice. This is the sense in which this word has also been used in many of the Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh). According to this meaning, whatever the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) as the Prophet and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs as the Caliphs have done in any aspect of life is considered as the Sunnah of the Prophet and his Rightly-Guided Caliphs, whether it pertained to acts of worship, societal practices, or issues of politics.

In the light of the aforesaid explanation, the purport of the Saying of the Prophet will be that the Muslims should exactly follow, particularly in the event of disagreements arising in the Brotherhood, the example set by the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) in following Islam, in its establishment and its other requirements, and whatever the Rightly-Guided Caliphs have done after him following the Prophet's example.

Now just ponder; what kind of state is deprivation of collectivism? Is it not the state of disagreement? No doubt, it is the state of disagreement; rather, it is something more than that. This is such a state that it can be described as the last and the worst kind of disagreement created by innumerable disagreements. Therefore, when it becomes essential to hold fast to the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and his Rightly-Guided Caliphs in the event of any disagreement, it becomes even more essential to follow this instruction when the worst kind of disagreement sets in the Brotherhood.

Now let us examine what was the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and his Rightly-Guided Caliphs in such a situation or what it could have been.

As far as the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) is concerned, we do not find any Sunnah of the Prophet which directly relates

to the state of chaos in the Muslim Brotherhood, because there was no possibility of such a situation arising in his era. Therefore, it will be futile to search for an example in his Sunnah as to what he had done in such a chaotic situation. The entire work of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) comprised of building up a new brotherhood. Hence, if any guidance can be found concerning the state of chaos in the Muslim Brotherhood, it can be found in his methodology which he adopted in building up the Muslim Brotherhood. Therefore, we have to just find out how he had formed the Brotherhood, and then exactly do what he had done to revive and reorganize the Brotherhood. This will be the Sunnah that we have to hold fast in the state of disagreement. No detailed introduction is required as to how the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) formed the Brotherhood. Every knowledgeable person knows that the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) did not consider it enough that people should just declare that "*There is no god but Allah*" and keep on performing the Prayers, Fasting, etc. individually. Rather, he demanded more from the people. The meaning of the Verse, "*Hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves*" that the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) had established by his practice was that whoever accepted Islam, his life automatically became part of a very strong organization. He used to join together all such individuals in the relationship of collectivism as the beads are strung into a thread. For several years during the Madinite era, it was incumbent upon the new Muslims to migrate to Madinah leaving behind all their belongings. It means that it was not enough for them to mentally become a part of the organized group; rather, it was, under the then prevalent circumstances, mandatory upon them to physically join the organized group. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) did not rescind this order until Islam did not become politically strong, and there was no threat that the powers of disbelief would be a hindrance for its establishment. When the situation became stable after the conquest of Makkah and there was no threat from the Unbelievers and polytheists, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) made the pronouncement that migration was not mandatory and that the Muslims could remain at their places and be part of the Brotherhood by

discharging their individual and collective duties (*"There is no migration after the Conquest"*).

Keeping in view this methodology of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), it can be presumed that if the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) had faced such a chaotic situation in the Muslim Brotherhood, his Sunnah would have been similar. That is, he would not have left any stone unturned to change the chaos into discipline and organisation. Therefore, in view of this, whenever the Muslim Brotherhood faces disagreements and chaos, it would be its responsibility to change such chaos by unity and discipline.

Let us examine the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Since the era of the Caliphate was quite different from the era of Prophethood and it was practically possible for the cultivation of misunderstanding – it happened to a certain extent – we can get direct guidance from the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.

The first link of the chain of Caliphate is Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique. He is not only the first link but his Sunnah provides us with clear guidance in respect of the issue under discussion. Therefore, it would be more beneficial to examine it. After the expiry of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), when Hazrat Abu Bakr was appointed the Caliph of the Brotherhood, some of the Arab tribes who had accepted Islam refused to pay the Zakat to the Government. The situation had become so volatile that a strong-willed person like Hazrat Umar was hesitant to take action against them. Hazrat Abu Bakr, finding no sanction for this attitude of the aforesaid tribes in Islam, made the announcement with full courage and determination that:

"By Allah! If these people refuse to hand over to me even the rope with which camel is tethered, which they used to give to the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), I will wage war against them."¹

¹ Muslim, Vol. 1.

Just ponder over each and every word of the above pronouncement. Hazrat Abu Bakr did not say that he would wage war against these people if they refused to deduct the amount of Zakat from their wealth; rather, he announced that if these people refused to hand over the Zakat to him (i.e. the Islamic Government) he would wage war against them. In other words, according to him waging war becomes essential against those who refuse to deposit their Zakat in the Islamic treasury even if they deduct their Zakat from their wealth and distribute it amongst the needy on their own. Everyone will feel that it was clearly an issue of collective system. The attitude of those who had stopped the payment of Zakat was breaching this system, and waging of war by Hazrat Abu Bakr against them was to safeguard this system from that breach. Hence, from this action his Sunnah was established that no breach in the collective system of the Brotherhood will be tolerated and that it should be stopped at all costs.

In another narration, we get more details about the aforesaid incident that when Hazrat Umar suggested to Hazrat Abu Bakr: "*O Caliph of the Prophet! Be amicable with the people and be kind to them,*" Hazrat Abu Bakr said to him:

"O Umar, while you were very strong in the era of Ignorance, why have you become very weak in respect of Islam. No doubt, revelation has stopped and the Religion (of Islam) has been made perfect; will it become imperfect when I am still alive."¹

The aforesaid statement of Hazrat Abu Bakr throws light on the issue under discussion from another angle. This statement is a clear pronouncement that if any one of the requirements of Islam is refused to be fulfilled, according to him, it is making the perfected Religion of Islam imperfect, and it is against the dignity of a Muslim to tolerate it. Rather, it becomes mandatory to save Islam from this danger of becoming imperfect. In other words, when the Religion is being made imperfect or it has been made imperfect, it is the

¹ Mishkat, Manaqib Abu Bakr.

Sunnah of the Caliph of the Prophet that every effort should be made to retain the original form of the Religion. Now think, does not the disorganization of the Brotherhood and disregarding the fundamental requirement of the Religion: "*Hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves*" render the Religion of Islam imperfect? It is quite obvious that there can be only one answer to this question and it is that when the refusal of a few tribes to pay Zakat renders the Religion of Islam imperfect, then the entire Muslim Brotherhood remaining disorganized and without a leader and Imam and suspension of many of the ordinances of the Islamic Law will mean rendering Islam not only imperfect but paralysed. If this is the fact then it will be the Sunnah of the Caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr that the Brotherhood is again organised.

There is another Saying of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) in this regard, which should be pondered upon. It is as follows:

"Indeed, the Religion (of Islam) manifested in a strange environment and (a time will come) when it will return back to that strange environment. Hence, blessedness is for those strangers, who will set right those of my Traditions (Sunnah) which the people have spoiled."¹

In the aforesaid Saying, while foretelling about the bad condition of the Muslim Brotherhood in future, the people who have been given the glad tidings of being blessed are those who will set right the Traditions (Sunnah) of the Prophet of Allah, which the ignorant and wicked-mongers would have spoiled. It is quite obvious that apart from informing about a future event, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) in the aforesaid Saying has advised all conscientious Muslims that they should try to protect and revive his Traditions whenever they are spoiled. Allowing any part of the system of life left behind by the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) to disintegrate is the death of Faith in Islam itself, however trivial the law (Islamic jurisprudence) might consider it, because as far as the

¹ Tirmizi, Vol. 2, p. 92.

servitude of Allah and the obedience of His Prophet is concerned, every tradition of the Prophet is important and a Muslim cannot bear to see even his one established footprint getting erased. Here again bring forth the question and ponder: Is the disorganisation of the Muslim Brotherhood and suspension of numerous ordinances of Islamic Law from the practical life of the Muslims any ordinary defect and imperfection of the Traditions of the Prophet? Of course, it is not. This defect and imperfection is so huge and fatal that no other defect or fatal imperfection than this can be imagined. Then, what kind of action we can take in the light of the Prophet's instruction? That is, what line of action the true followers of Islam should take in this situation which can make them entitled for the title of the "strangers?" No doubt, there can be only one answer to this question, and it is that the concern to organise the scattered organisation and re-establish the required collective system should dominate all other concerns, and every kind of struggle should be undertaken for this purpose.

After the Quran and the Sunnah, if we examine the principles of Islamic jurisprudence and scholastic theology, as is expected, we will not find anything different. Hence, in the previous chapter under the heading of "The Inevitable Necessity of a Government System," the opinions of Islamic scholars have been placed before you that there is unanimity in the Muslim Brotherhood on the establishment of Caliphate, and in the opinion of 'Allama Taftazani: "*Performance of many duties of the Islamic Law depend on it.*" If these two facts cannot be denied, then they establish a third fact that if collectivism and organisation has not remained in the Brotherhood, it will be its duty to re-establish it, because this is the collectivism and organisation on which depends the establishment of the Caliphate. If a roof cannot be constructed without walls, the system of Caliphate also cannot be established without a collective system. It is an agreed principle that that task also becomes a duty on which performance of a duty depends. Performance of many religious ordinances depends on the appointment of an Imam (leader/Caliph), and the appointment of Imam is dependent on the organization of the

Brotherhood. Hence, the essentiality of the first thing made the second thing essential, and when the second thing became essential, the third automatically becomes essential.

THE METHOD TO REVIVE THE COLLECTIVE SYSTEM

After reaching this conclusion, naturally the question arises as to what would be the right method of reviving the collective system. How can this Brotherhood, which has turned into a crowd, become once again an "al-Jamat" and how can it get back its lost organised collective system? This question, in itself, has been quite important, but the present situation has made it even more complicated, because this question is such a natural and practical question that it has been continuously present in the intellectual minds and, therefore, its answer has also been continuously thought over. However, whatever has been thought about this question, so far, has been very unsatisfactory; rather, it has itself become a sorry example of differences and chaos because of which this issue has become even more complicated. Therefore, we have to ponder about this matter with full attention. While contemplating about it, three fundamental facts should be very clear in our minds:

First, as has been discussed and described earlier, the Muslim Brotherhood is not in need of any unrestricted collectivism. Rather, it requires a particular kind of collectivism and unity whose binder should be only the Rope of Allah and whose existence should be for the objective of bearing witness of the Truth, enjoining the good, forbidding the wrong and establishment of the Religion of Islam, and nothing else.

Second, since the revival of organised collectivism is a religious requirement, the method of its revival should also be religious. That is, this method will be determined by the Book of Allah and the Traditions of the Prophet and not the philosophy and ideology of any Tom, Dick and Harry, or the experiences and "traditions" of any un-Islamic movements.

Third, as we do not find any direct guidance from the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) about the action to be taken in the event of chaotic condition of the Brotherhood, similarly, we do not find any instruction as how to get rid of this condition. The reason is similar to the one which has already been discussed. That is, the chaotic situation which is under discussion is quite different from the situation in which the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) had to work. We have to consider the issue of reformation and reorganisation of such a Muslim Brotherhood which has been in existence for quite some time, whereas the issue before the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) was creation of a new Brotherhood. Therefore, if we can find any guidance from the traditions and methodology of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), it would be the guidance derived from his traditions. Moreover, this will not remain confined to this; rather, its demands go even farther. Because of the difference between the two situations, if we cannot get direct guidance from the Traditions of the Prophet, we cannot get it even from the Quran. The reason for this is the particular nature of the Quran which is quite different from other academic books. The academic books take, one by one, every possible aspect of their respective central theme and express their opinion about them. They seldom discuss the problems pertaining to the practical life of their readers; rather, most of the time they do not have any determined audience before them and they are seen describing their philosophical thoughts deeply submerged in the world of imagination. On the other hand, the Book of Allah has been sent to take the humanity to its goal of salvation. It has a determined audience and a determined mission. Whatever it says, it says according to the demands of the existent situation. Therefore, if it had kept in view the creation of a new Brotherhood while issuing instructions about its organisation and has not issued any instructions keeping in view a brotherhood in chaos, it has rightly done so.

Keep these three clear facts in your mind. Then look at the Book of Allah and the Traditions of the Prophet and find out what can be the right method of reorganising the Brotherhood according to them. The fundamental instructions that the Quran had given for uniting and

organising the Muslim Brotherhood at the time of its formation have been described in detail under the title "Islamic Collectivism." It has also been understood how the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) had followed these instructions. Keeping in view all these things, contemplate on this important question whether these Quranic instruction apply to the issue of reorganisation of the Brotherhood or not, and if so, to what extent?

To solve this question, we have to examine once again the style and wordings of these instructions of the Quran and the internal nature of the methodology adopted by the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and find out whether these instructions are general and fundamental in nature or not in spite of being related to a particular situation. This examination will give us a positive answer, because from these Verses we do not find any indication that these instructions of the Quran fundamentally related only to the formation and organisation of a new Brotherhood under the guidance of a Prophet and that we have to adopt some other method if we have to reform and reorganise an existent Muslim Brotherhood. Contrary to this, we find that these Verses act as fundamental instructions. Even the style in which it addresses is completely general. That is, it is not said, O Prophet, form and organise the Muslim Brotherhood on these foundations, or O Companions of the Prophet, organise yourselves on these lines. Rather, it has been said: *O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared... and hold fast, all together, by the Rope of Allah.*" This proves the fact that the Believers should always perform the duty of their organisation on these lines, whether they belonged to that era when the Brotherhood was under formation, or belong to the era when the Brotherhood is in need of reorganisation because of chaos and disorganisation.

When we examine it intellectually, the result will be the same, because whether the issue is organisation at the time of formation of the Brotherhood or the reorganisation after it has been formed, the objective of both, indeed, will be one. When the objective is one, it makes no difference if the

members are selected and gathered from outside or they are called from within to reorganise themselves. However, as far as the ethical, social and religious rights of the individuals are concerned, it does make a difference on the basis of "outside" and "inside." The rights of a non-performing Believer will be more than a non-Muslim even if his attitude about the call towards the reorganisation is inimical; this is the difference that exists between the two. Undoubtedly, although this is a great difference, but it will not affect the fundamental principles of the organisation of the Brotherhood; let alone affecting it, it seems to have no relationship with this issue.

Hence, in whatever way this is examined, the method of reorganisation of the Brotherhood will be the same which is found in the Quran and the Traditions of the Prophet and which was adopted at the time of its formation, and it will comprise of the following points:

1. The work is to be commenced with the general call to "Revert back to the Truth." With all resources and power available, the self-cognition in the Brotherhood should be brought out. Its members should be reminded of the purpose of their existence on the earth, of the attributes with which the Religion that they claim to relate with wants them to adorn, and with what sacred activity that it wants them to collectively get engaged with. In response to this "general call," those of its members who come forward should be informed that the demand of their Master and Lord is that they should submit themselves to Him and there should not remain in their sight any other goal than achievement of His Good Pleasure - "*Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam (submission).*"
2. Those who accept this call of "Revert back to the Truth" with full contentment of their heart and mind and practically get prepared to surrender themselves to Allah should be informed that the forgotten objective that they are again adopting is a very great

objective and demands a long and hard campaign, and that they cannot succeed unless they do not organise themselves and together become a cemented wall; apart from this, it is the natural requirement of a Believer. Therefore, it is not enough to become a God-fearing Muslim individually, but it is necessary that they should all form an organised group which can also be collectively called a Muslim and God-fearing group. In this manner, those who are prepared to form an organised group – there should not be any impediment for this if they are sincere in the decision to revert back to the Truth – the qualification for their becoming part of the organisation should be nothing but the "Rope of Allah" (i.e. the Religion of Allah) and "Complete Submission" ("*O you who believe, enter into Islam wholeheartedly.*"¹). No such person should be admitted into this organisation who wants to associate with it with some other qualification, whose motivation is other than the Good Pleasure of Allah and salvation and success in the Hereafter, and who does not have in sight discharging of the duty of enjoining the good, forbidding the wrong, bearing witness of the Truth and establishment of the Religion of Islam – "*Hold fast to the Rope of Allah and be not divided among yourselves.*"

3. There would be two real duties of the organisation so established; they should not be lost sight of even for a moment and should always be the pivot of their actions and struggles. One is that it should keep on calling the other members of the Brotherhood towards "Revert back to the Truth." Second is that it should make arrangements for the education and training of its members. The importance and requirement of these two things is quite obvious. The objective of the first is to increase the strength of the organisation so that it can become robust and strong. The objective of the second is that the internal

¹ The Quran, 2:208.

strength and energy of the organisation should not only subsist but get increased day by day; the spirit of Islam, Faith and God-fearing should not get decayed in its members but remain fresh and grow continuously; their motive to join the organisation should not get weakened and should not get affected by any other motivation.

THE PRACTICAL METHOD OF REORGANISATION

After the determination of the method of reorganisation of the Muslim Brotherhood, this discussion, in principle, ends here. However, its practical aspect still remains to be determined as to what should be the practical method of this reorganisation and how it should be done. In the presence of the Prophet, this does not become a problem. But in the presence of only the Brotherhood, this becomes a serious problem. As far as the first point is concerned, the plan of action in this regard is quite obvious, because rising of a person or a few persons to give a call to the people to "Revert back to the Truth" is not at all unexpected. This happens quite often. But the question is what happens next. How to go about with regard to the other two points? What would be the programme to take this initial call of "Revert back to the Truth" to its final goal? This issue is not quite clear and, therefore, requires a correct solution.

Evidently, in order to find the solution we have to seek the guidance from the Quran and the Sunnah only. The Verses and the Sayings of the Prophet which can guide us in this regard have all been quoted in the beginning of this book. Go through them once again and ponder that the religion which mandates performance of every deed, as far as possible, collectively and under the authority of an Imam or Amir; which mandates performance of a major part of the exemplary act of worship, the Salat (which obviously requires solitude), in congregation and under the command of an Imam; which instructs its followers to perform Hajj and Zakat, as far as possible, collectively; which does not consider lawful for three

persons to travel without a leader, will ever like the great task of reorganisation of the Brotherhood be undertaken without a proper leadership and whether this method of reorganisation will be in accordance with its temperament and instructions. The intellect answers this question in the negative. Undoubtedly, we do not hear the words like *Jamat*, *Amir*, organization, obedience during the Makkan era, but it does not mean that their sense and meanings were not in use. The exalted personality on whom his followers were ever ready to sacrifice their lives, who was their beloved possession in the entire world, whose mere gestures were more sacred and meant for obedience than the ordinances of kings and emperors, did not require pronouncement of his leadership in the legal terminology. Hence, in the entire Makkan era, we find not even one incident where practically there was no collective organisation and system of obedience. Further, it should be remembered that the words of "*They (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation*"¹ were revealed in Makkah. Is it possible that such words could have been revealed in respect of those people who were devoid of collectivism and discipline? Undoubtedly, these words of the Quran along with the historical facts prove that a strong and robust organisational structure was in existence and thriving during the Makkan era, mutual consultations were carried out with regard to important issues of the Brotherhood and propagation, decisions were taken after great contemplation and discussion, and the entire Brotherhood of the Believers used to follow these decisions, and nothing was done without the permission of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh).

It is better to understand one principled fact here. The fact is that as long as the people who accept Islam are of that kind which were found in the Makkan era and their leader is that kind of leader who led them, then usage of words like "party," "leadership," "organisation," and "obedience" are not at all necessary; rather, usage of such words would have been an insult to the greatness and lovability of that great personality and even an insult to the passion of love and

¹ The Quran, 42:38.

respect of his sincere followers. These words can be used only when either of the two things is not found. Hence, this is the reason that whereas it was enough in Makkah to instruct, "*hold fast to Allah*," in Madinah it was necessary not only to add on to it, "*to the Rope of Allah*," but also "*be not divided among yourselves*".¹ Similarly, there was no mention of words denoting discipline and obedience in the Makkan era, but as soon as the Madanite era commenced, the words of "*obey the Prophet*" were begun to be used. This happened because the situation had changed in Madinah. That is, all the Believers in Madinah were not as sincere and obedient as the Believers were in the Makkan era since many insincere Muslims and hypocrites had joined the group of sincere Muslims in Madinah, whose weak Faith and hypocrisy forced them to go against the requirements of Islam. Therefore, it was necessary to instruct the Muslims, in clear words, to be united and obey Allah, His Prophet and those in authority.

This was the example of that situation when the leader and the propagator is an exemplary figure and his followers are not so exemplary. As far as the contrary situation, the Islamic history is full of its examples, where everyone can see that whenever the Muslims had to go away from the Prophet of Allah (pbuh), they never used to take any step without a leader. In the Madanite era, quite often, delegations and military campaigns were sent and no delegation or military contingent was sent without appointing its leader. Although such situation rarely arose in the Makkan era, but whenever occasion arose no other procedure was adopted. Hence, at the time of migration to Abyssinia, the Muslims migrated not as individuals but as a group under a leader. The first group of migrants comprised of 10 Muslims and the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) appointed Hazrat 'Uthman bin Maz'un as its leader.² Hence, it is not right to think that there was no organizational system in the Makkan period by just looking at the outward situation.

¹ The words of "*hold fast to Allah*" are found in Chapter 22 (Sura Hajj), and the words "*hold fast to the Rope of Allah and be not divided among yourselves*" are found in Chapter 3 (Sura Ale 'Imran) of the Quran.

² Seerat Ibn Hisham, Vol. 1.

From this discussion, the requirement of Islam and the viewpoint of the Islamic Law with regard to the method of organising the Muslim Brotherhood become fully clear. Further, the practice of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and the general instructions of the Quran and the Sunnah with regard to collectivism stress that the reformation and reorganisation of the Brotherhood should be carried out under a system and leadership; even the intellect says so. In the entire human history, we cannot find even one example where any collective revolution taking place without collective and organised struggle; the natural laws working in this world also prove this point. Therefore, if the movement to reorganise the Brotherhood is taken up without a strong organisational system, it will never succeed. As a result of the efforts put in to reform the individuals, we might get a few, or even in large numbers, reformed and religious minded individuals who are also desirous of restoration of a collective system. But until they are not strongly bounded by the passion of achieving a common collective goal and there is no collective system and leadership for this purpose, the Brotherhood can never achieve that collectivism which is required by the Religion of Allah and without which, according to Hazrat Umar, Islam cannot remain Islam. To consider existence of such persons who are religious and are desirous to have a collective system but do not have their own organisation or leadership, as the guarantee for the successful reorganisation of the Brotherhood is as good as regarding just arranging bricks one over the other and deeming it as the rampart of a fort. Indeed it would be a strange thing that whereas all other matters pertaining to the Muslims are accomplished in an orderly manner and under an organisation and leadership, and only the campaign taken up to organise a disorganised Brotherhood is to be without such an organization and discipline. In such a situation, will not this campaign oppose itself, and is not enough to guarantee its failure that the struggle to achieve organisation and collectivism is itself devoid of organisation and collectivism?

From whatever angle you look at this issue, the only practical way of implementing the remaining two points would be that the people who associated themselves with this objective should establish a collective organisation, and select one of them as their leader who can best serve this cause. Further, they should have a consultative system which fulfils the requirements of the consultation as set out by the Quran in the Verse: "*They (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation.*"¹ And thus this campaign is run, without a break, with organisation and discipline.

It need not be stressed here that this organisation will not be the "al-Jamat," nor will it be the alternative of the organisation of the entire Brotherhood, but it will work towards creation of such an al-Jamat and organisation. It will follow the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) and the Sunnah of the Rightly-guided Caliphs, it will be recognised by its strangeness, and it will rebuild and reform that aspect of Islam and the Tradition of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) which has been either destroyed or distorted.

¹ The Quran, 42:38.

SECLUSION

LEGALITY OF SECLUSION

On the one hand, as has been detailed in the previous pages, it is stressed that an organised collective life is essential for Islam and Faith, but on the other hand, we find some pointers in the Holy Quran and some very clear instructions of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) which indicate that secluded life is not un-Islamic and rather, it is quite Islamic and it has the permission of Allah and His Prophet (pbuh).

For example, in the second part (ruku') of Sura al-Kahaf (Chapter 18) of the Quran, we find the story of the people of the Kahaf. These were those men who had removed themselves from the human habitat and had gone and took refuge in a cave to worship and remember Allah. That is, they had adopted the last format of non-collective system of life. The Holy Quran has not shown even the slightest dislike for this attitude in the manner in which it has described this story. On the contrary, it has presented it as an exemplary model of high standard of godliness and has declared these cave dwellers as having strong Faith and on a pinnacle of guidance:

"They were who believed in their Lord, and we advanced them in guidance."

Similarly, look at the following Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh):

A person asked the Prophet of Allah (pbuh): "Who is the best man among the people, O Prophet of Allah? He said: "The Believer who struggles in the Path of Allah with his life and wealth." He asked: "Then who?" He said: "That Believer who has secluded himself in one of the ravines,

and worships his Lord there, and has let alone the people from his evil.”¹

In the narration of Hazrat Ibn Abbas, the words “He stays away from the evils of the people” have been reported instead of “has let alone the people from his evil.”²

The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said: “People will face an era when the best wealth of a Muslim will be his sheep that he takes with him on the peaks of the mountains and places of water, and keep on running away from the trials and turbulence with his Religion.”³

In the light of the aforesaid Sayings, it is clear that it would not be wrong, rather, it would be a better attitude, if a Muslim engages himself in the worship and remembrance of Allah secluding himself from the collective life.

NOT PERSEVERANCE, BUT CONCESSION

Undoubtedly, such instructions do exist in the Quran and the Sayings. When a thing is found in the Quran and the Sayings, it would be as Islamic as any other thing. But the question is: what is the meaning of being “Islamic” here? Is this secluded life absolutely that Islamic life that whenever it is adopted it would be declared as exactly similar to that collective life liked by Allah and His Prophet, or is it something else? To find out the correct answer to this question, we have to contemplate on the following three principled things:

1. What are the instructions that have been given to the Muslims which they have to follow while adopting a collective life?

¹ Muslim, Fazl al-Jihad wa al-Ribat.

² Fatah al-Bari, Vol. 1, p. 4.

³ Bukhari.

2. How do the objective of creation of man and the existential objective of the Muslim Brotherhood view the attitude of seclusion?
3. Are the statements of the Quran and the Sayings in respect of seclusion prove it to be "Islamic" and are in the nature of general and unrestricted instructions, or the fact is quite contrary to it?

As far as the first thing is concerned, all the relevant details have already been brought out in the previous pages. From these details, we understand that fundamentally only collective life is demanded by Islam. It not only commands to "*hold fast to the collective life*," but also commands "*you should keep away from division*," and that "*the wolf devours that sheep which gets separated from its flock*." It means that obedience of the Islamic commands to lead a collective life is obligatory, not optional.

As far as the second thing is concerned, the attitude of seclusion is neither compatible with the objective of the creation of man, nor the existential objective of the Muslim Brotherhood tolerates it. The Holy Quran describes the objective of the creation of man as vicegerency of Allah and Allah's worship. If the secluded life is to be declared "Islamic" as the collective life, it would mean that its adaptation would not be wrong, that every Muslim can adapt it, and that every member of the Brotherhood can be advised to do so, or rather even commanded to do so. It means that logically such a situation can be perceived, or such a situation can be likeable, when all the Muslims have gone and sat in seclusion. But if such a situation comes into existence, however attractive and gratifying it might be, it is quite evident that it will not fulfil the objective for which man has been created, because in such a situation, there will not remain the slightest possibility of discharging the duty of "vicegerency" of Allah on the earth and performance of Allah's "worship" and his slavish obedience as they are ought to be discharged. Similarly, the existential objective of the Muslim Brotherhood has been determined as "enjoining the right," "forbidding the wrong," "bearing witness of the Truth," and "establishment of Religion of Islam." If the

entire Muslim Brotherhood were to adopt seclusion, it would be impossible for it to discharge its aforesaid duties. If there is no society in existence, there will not be any opportunity to "enjoin the right"; "bear witness to the Truth"; and "establish the Religion of Allah."

Now, let us examine the statements of the Quran and the Sayings of the Prophet which legalise the secluded life. In the first Saying, while the Muslim who secludes himself in a ravine and worships Allah has been described as a lofty Muslim, it also describes two other things. One, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) has not described together the Believer who struggles in the Path of Allah with his life and wealth and the Believer who secludes himself in a ravine. Rather, when the person asked him: "*Who is the best man among the people,*" he kept quiet after just saying: "*That Believer who struggles in the Path of Allah with his life and wealth.*" When he again asked: "*Then who,*" only then the Prophet told about the other person, and that too by using the word "then." Second, there should be a necessity and motivation for seclusion, and that motivation is saving himself from the evils of others or saving others from his evil.

Similar is the case with the second Saying. Here also, along with recommending seclusion two things have been stated. One, it says that "*people will face an era;*" in other words, it would be an extraordinary era having some peculiarities. Second, when such an era arrives, the righteous will or should take their sheep and leave for mountains and valleys so that they can protect their Religion from trials and turbulence.

Similarly, in the incident of the people of Kahaf, although the Quran considers seclusion as an Islamic life, it contains two other issues. One, these comprised of only a few persons while majority of their nation were polytheists. Second, they openly pronounced their belief in monotheism before their nation and called upon them to accept monotheism (*"Behold, they stood up and said: 'Our Lord is the*

Lord of the heavens and of the earth'."¹]. Not only they just called upon their nation, but did not leave any arguments open for them ("These our people have taken for worship gods other than Him; why do they not bring forward an authority clear (and convincing) for what they do?"²). Third, they did not made the cave their permanent residence, but a refuge and they sought refuge only when their nation was not prepared to bear with them and when staying in their habitat means sacrificing their Faith and lives ("For if they should come upon you, they would stone you or force you to return to their cult"³).

This examination of the statements of the Quran and the Sayings clearly tell that the instruction to adopt seclusion is not general and unconditional; rather, it is bounded by some conditions and restrictions; there are some particular circumstances when it is acted upon; and a Muslim is expected to adopt it under a religious exigency or under a great compulsion.

To know the "Islamic" nature of the secluded life, we have examined it from different angles. In the light of this examination, it cannot be perceived that the nature of both the secluded life and the collective life is equally Islamic. On the contrary, it has been established that basically only the collective life is the Islamic life and fundamentally it should be adopted. As far as the secluded life is concerned, basically it is not the Islamic life which can be adopted in usual circumstances; rather, it is a temporary kind of Islamic life which can be adopted only in certain special circumstances and under extreme compulsion. These "special circumstances" are the circumstances of trial and turbulence, and this "extreme compulsion" is the compulsion of protecting and securing the Faith and the Religion of Islam. That is, when that collective life which is, in fact, required for fulfilling the religious demands and for cultivation and development of the Faith, loses its efficacy to a great extent and begins to work

¹ The Quran, 18:14.

² The Quran, 18:15.

³ The Quran, 18:20.

against the interests of Faith and Religion, then with intense grief and sorrow a Muslim is forced to adopt the secluded life, because in such a situation fulfilling the objective of the creation of man and the existential objective of the Muslim Brotherhood would become non-existent to a great extent, and the servitude of Allah can be performed only partially.

Anyhow, the real home of Faith and Islam is the collective life where they can flourish as they want. But when this home does not allow them to live peacefully there, they are compelled to take refuge in strange lands and will not have any other recourse than to lead a dismal life of refuge and seclusion.

Not only that the secluded life is a temporary Islamic life, but its status is secondary to the collective life. It is true that the secluded life is adopted because of compulsion and in the interest of Faith and Religion and it is not due to one's own fault, this compulsion and faultlessness does not make this type of life equal to the real Islamic life, nor that person who sits in seclusion and worships Allah will be equal to that man who performs this duty while leading a collective life. This difference in the status of the two is quite obvious. The worship of the first person remains confined to a few individual acts of worship such as Salat, Fasting, etc., while the worship of the other begins from individual acts of worship and extends to the last limits of worship which is the struggle in the Path of Allah with life and wealth. Hence, justice demands that the status of the first should be lower than the second. This is not the judgement of intellect and logic alone; rather, the aforesaid Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) also prove this point. When the person asked "*Who is the best man among the people,*" the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) did not mention about the Believer who struggles in the Path of Allah with his life and wealth along with the Believer who sits in seclusion in a ravine and worships Allah, but makes a mention of the first kind of Believers and keeps quiet. It clearly means that "the best man" will be only the first kind of the Believers and none can be better than them. Hence, when again asked: "*Then who,*" he mentioned about that Believer who has

secluded himself in a ravine to worship his Lord. The use of the word "then" by the inquirer and the commencement of the answer by the Prophet with the same word makes it quite obvious and clear that the secluded life is lower and of secondary status to the collective life. In the language of Islamic law, the path of seclusion is called as the "way of concession" and not that of "perseverance."

This is the reason that in spite of the secluded life being "Islamic," we do not find any example of this kind of life in the lives of the Prophets of Allah (peace be upon them). There was not even one Prophet amongst the thousands of Prophets who had adopted this attitude, although we cannot even fully perceive the harsh and severe situations and circumstances that they had to face. However, since they were the Prophets of Allah it was impossible for them to adopt this attitude, because once having adopted the secluded life they would have cut themselves off from the people and could not have discharged their duties as Prophets. Moreover, they did not have to adopt the "way of concession" as the question of "saving the people from their evil" or "saving their Faith and Religion from the evils of others" did not arise at all. As far as saving their lives is concerned, they never considered their lives their own to feel the necessity of saving them from the tyrants and oppressors of their time.

CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONDITIONS

Now, let us understand those special circumstances when Islam permits to adopt this "way of concession." As far as the principled answer to this question is concerned, it is quite obvious from the aforesaid discussion. That is, the permission or instruction to keep away from the responsibilities of the required collective life of Islam is given only when the society has been engulfed in "evil" and "trial and turbulence," and that too for that person who feels that it is necessary to do so in order to protect and save his Faith and Religion. Hence, in the second Saying, it has been indicated with the words: "*running away from the trials and turbulence with his Religion.*"

Similarly, with regard to the first Saying, the Islamic scholars have explained that "sitting in seclusion in a ravine" relates only to the era of trials and turbulence as is clear from the wordings of the Sayings itself: "*and has let alone the people from his evil.*"

However, probably the thing is still not clear with this brief answer. Therefore, it is essential to determine the nature of "trial" and "evil" which have been mentioned in the aforesaid Sayings. It is quite obvious that the trial and evil do not denote here the trials and evils that are generally found in every era of the world; even the era of the Prophethood and the era of the Rightly-guided Caliphs were not devoid of trials and evils, because during these eras at least the evil and trial of hypocrisy was present and quite often mutual differences used to culminate in bloody conflicts. It is understood from this that that "trial and evil" because of which a Muslim is allowed to separate himself from the collective life and its responsibilities and take care of himself must be an extraordinary kind of trial and evil. To find out how extraordinary they must be, we have to deeply contemplate on the sentences of the aforesaid Sayings: "*running away from the trials and turbulence with his Religion;*" "*He stays away from the evils of the people;*" "*and has let alone the people from his evil.*" The meaning of "trial" and "evil" in these sentences is that worst state of the society where a Muslim, in spite of all the precautions, is not able to protect his Faith and Religion, and due to the increasing pressure of the evil forces their future looks gloomy and that too to such an extent that the evil deeds of others begin to adversely affect his own heart and mind and he fears that he would be drenched in the filth of the environment, and eventually he himself might become the propagator of evil and standard-bearer of "trial and evil."

It is also understood from the above narration that if the situation does not get so dangerous as to cause harm to the Faith and Religion, then it will not be right to take advantage of this concession, and in such a situation a Muslim will not be permitted to separate himself from the collective life, turn away from the demands of the communal

organisation and collectivism, just be mindful of his own self and leave the Brotherhood to be on its own so much so that it gradually loses its collective nature and the remaining embers of good in it, and thus go astray from its existential objective. However, this concession can be taken advantage of when the required collective system practically exists in the Muslim Brotherhood and the good is dominant in the society. In such a situation, if a few persons were to go and sit in seclusion because of their own peculiar choice and separate themselves from the outside world, it would be said that since the majority of the Brotherhood is engaged in discharging its duties and protecting the Religion, it does no harm if a few persons adopt the secluded life and limit their struggle to the purification of their own souls, although it will still be said that they have taken up an inferior task leaving behind a superior one. But if the Brotherhood is not in such a happy situation, if it is losing its organizational structure, if the Muslims, instead of "al-Jamat," are turning into a crowd, if the Muslim society has changed its direction from Islam to something else, and if the right Islamic collective system is not in working condition, then, without any real threat to Islam, choosing and adopting secluded life leaving the collective life of the Brotherhood at the verge of death, in no way, will be considered Islamic way of servitude and religious way of life.

PRACTICAL FORMS

The last part of this issue which needs to be examined is what should be the practical form of the secluded life and what are the limits of this concession? In answer to this question, no one form can be suggested, because it depends on the prevalent circumstances which cannot be the same for every person and in any given era. It means that a person has to adopt that form of secluded life which is compatible with the extent to which the circumstances become dangerous for a person's Faith and Religion. For example:

If the situation turns so bad that it becomes difficult to remain firm even on the fundamental Islamic principles, and

the society does not allow to manifest and perform the fundamental teachings, then the last form of the secluded life can be adopted which the people of the Kahaf had adopted. When they were not allowed to pronounce and propagate the Truth and were convinced that if they ever tried to do so they would be stoned to death, they completely separated themselves from their people and took refuge in a cave.

If the situation is less dangerous than above, then the form of seclusion will be of lesser degree. That is, a Muslim should not completely separate himself from the society. Rather, he should just keep apart from the common collective issues and leave the wicked-mongers alone, and instead of trying to eradicate their wickedness with his hands and tongue, he should be contented to feel disgust about them in his heart. For the inevitable necessities of life, he should choose a lawful source of living, work for the Hereafter, keep performing the Salat, Fasting, Hajj and Zakat, and try to fulfil the rights of other human beings. Generally speaking, this would be the scenario that can be thought of a worst kind of Muslim society. Hence, in the Sayings in which permission has been given for adopting secluded life, it has been ordained to pay the Zakat along with establishment of the Prayers. This clearly points out towards this scenario, because Zakat can be paid only when there is some sort of contact with other fellow human beings; it cannot be paid while sitting in seclusion in caves and ravines.

PRECAUTION IN TAKING A DECISION

In the end, it is necessary to remind about the fact that extreme precaution and unbiased analysis are essential in determining the critical and threatening nature of the circumstances, because there are two inclinations of human nature which can become impediments in reaching the right decision. One is the inclination towards seclusion and the other is the inclination towards laziness. Hence, there is a strong apprehension that a person might get inclined towards the secluded life due to any one of these inclinations and

because of his personal inclination take a wrong estimation of the dangerous nature of the situation and think of it as dangerous to his Faith and Religion when really there is no such danger, and taking advantage of the Sayings pertaining to the secluded life gets himself separated from the communal organisation and the collective life, or in the event of non-existence of this organisation and collective system considers himself free from the responsibilities of re-establishing them. It is quite obvious that the objective of such a decision would be to satisfy his personal inclination and choice and would not be to follow the Sayings of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh).

The real choice of a Muslim and his life-long efforts should be to remain attached, as far as possible, to the collectivism and should leave no stone unturned to develop it and keep it alive. He should think of separating from it only when it becomes an open threat for the Faith and Religion. Further, this separation should not be on the basis of his personal likes and dislikes, because according to the Islamic perception of religion and religiosity this cannot be left to the personal choice of an individual. Giving up the collective life is not like cutting of the nails and throwing them away, which gives a feeling of relief and comfort; rather, it is like cutting off of the nails along with the flesh which causes extreme pain and discomfort and for which no wise man will ever agree.

